

THE GUARDIAN

A Literary Monthly Published in Philadelphia

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THE GUARDIAN

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Notes on Contributors

JAMES STEPHENS, still in his forties, is the author of "The Crock of Gold," "Here Are Ladies," "Demi-Gods," "Songs from the Clay," "In the Land of Youth," "Derde" won him the Tailltean Medal, the most distinguished Irish award. Mr. Stephens will appear, in person, in Philadelphia at the third Guardian Contributor's Evening early in May.

ALAIN is a Norman, 57 years old, one of the leading French aestheticians. He is the author of several thousand *purpos* (chats), such as appear in this issue of The Guardian.

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GLADYS EDGERTON has contributed poems to the Art Review and Outlook (London).

ALLEN TATE, contributing editor to The Guardian, appeared in its first number. He is a member of the interesting Fugitive group of Nashville, Tenn. and has contributed to The Reviewer, S4N, Double Dealer, Folio, etc.

CHALLIS SILVAY is a California poet of 26 who has contributed to Poetry, Lyric West, Pegasus and other poetry journals.

HAZEL REEVE is a New York poetess of 20 who ran away from college last September. She is the wife of Adrian Richt, who appeared in the March Guardian. Miss Reeve was one of the group that published "Folio," in which each artist owned and controlled a page.

PIERRE LOVING is now residing in Paris after several years in Germany and Austria. He is well-known as dramatist and critic and his edited plays alone and with Frank Shay. He has just completed "Black Rock" a play that has been praised by Continental critics. He is one of the sponsors of "Vitalism," the newest school of "les jeunes."

HANSELL BAUGH appeared in the second number of The Guardian. He has appeared in 1924, The Reviewer, etc. and has translated Rimbaud.

ELISEO VIVAS is a young Latin-American "student of art and ideas."

MARETTE QUICK is a young Philadelphian, who studied at Columbia University. Her note on "Bazalgette's Thoreau" appeared in the February Contributor's Corner.

The photographs of the Weber paintings were made by Peter A. Juley and Son of New York.

Published by The Guardian Publishing Company, 720 Locust Street (West of Washington Square) Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Entered as second class matter November 19, 1924 at the Post office at Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, under Act of March 3, 1879.

MEYER EMIL MAURER, *Circulation Manager*

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The GUARDIAN

APRIL 1925.

ETCHED IN MOONLIGHT

By JAMES STEPHENS

CHAPTER I.

He waved his pipe angrily.

"Words," he said. "They dope us with words, and we sleep on them and snore about them. So with dream. They issue tomes about it, and they might as well issue writs for all the information they give."

I halted him there, for I respect science and love investigation.

"They don't claim to give answers to the riddles of existence," I expostulated, "their business is to collect and classify the facts that are available, and when a sufficient number of these have been gathered there is usually found among them an extra thing which makes examination possible."

"Hum!" said he.

"The difficulty lies in getting all the facts; but when these are given much more is given; for if a question can be fully stated the answer is conveyed in the question."

"That's it," said he; "they don't know enough, but there is a wide pretence——"

"More a prophecy than a pretence. They really state that this or that thing is knowable. It is only that you live hurriedly, and you think everything else should be geared up to your number."

"So they are, or they would not be visible and audible and tangible to me. But a ghost is geared differently to me; and I

think that when I am asleep and dreaming I am geared differently to the person who is talking to you here."

"Possibly."

"Certainly. Look at the time it has taken you and I to chatter our mutual nonsense. In an instant of that time I could have had a dream; and, in its infinitesimal duration, all the adventures and excitements of twenty or forty years could take place in ample and leisurely sequence. Someone has measured dream, and records that elaborate and complicated dreams covering years of time can take place while you would be saying knife."

"It was du Prell," I said.

"Whoever it was — I've seen a person awake and talking, but sleepy; noted that person halt for the beat of a word in his sentence, and continue with the statement that he has had a horrible dream. It must have taken place in the blink of an eye. There is no doubt that while we are asleep a power is waking in us which is more amazing than any function we know of in waking life. It is lightning activity, lightning order, lightning intelligence; and that is not to be considered as rhetoric, but as sober statement. Last night I had a dream, and in it twenty good years were lived through with all their days and nights in the proper places; and a whole chain of sequential incidents working from the most definite beginning to the most adequate end — and perhaps it all took place between the beginning and the ending of a yawn."

"Well, let us have the dream," said I; "for it is clear that you are spoiling to tell it."

"After what we were saying you might expect something dramatic or surprising; but neither surprise nor even interest is the centre of my thought about this dream. The chief person in the dream was myself; that is certain. The feeling of identity was complete during the dream; but myself in the dream was as unlike myself sitting here as you and I are unlike each other. I had a different physique in the dream; for, while I am now rather dumpish and fair and moonfaced, I was, last night, long and lean as a rake, with a black thatch sprouting over a hatchet head. I was different mentally; my character was not the one I now recognize myself by; and I was capable of being intrigued by events and speculation in which the person sitting before you would not take the slightest interest.

He paused for a few seconds as though reviewing his memories;

but, on a movement from me, he continued again, with many pauses and with much snorings on his pipe, as though he were drawing both encouragement and dubiety from it.

"Of course I am romantically-minded. We all are; the cat and the dog are. All life, and all in it, is romantic, for we and they and it are growing into a future that is all mystery out of a past not less mysterious; and the fear or hope that reaches to us from these extremes are faces of the romance that is life or consciousness, or whatever else we please to name it."

"But," he said, energetically, "I do not pine to rescue a distressed dragon from a savage maiden; nor do I dream of myself dispensing life and death and immortality with a spoon. Life is Romance; I am living, and I am Romance; and that adventure is as much as I have the ability to embark on. Well, last night, in dream, I was a person natively capable of such embarkations; and although I did not rescue anything from anybody, I am sure I would have done it as one to the manner born. And that character fitted me there, then, as a cat fits into its skin. In the dream I was unmistakably I, but I was not this I, either physically, mentally, or temperamentally. And the time was different. I don't know what date it was, but it was not to-day. I don't know what place it was, but it was not this place. I was acting in a convention foreign to the one we act in, and I was acting from an historical or ancestral convention which has no parallel in these times. I don't remember what language I was speaking. I don't remember the names of the people I was in contact with; nor do I recollect addressing anybody by name. I was too familiar with them to require such explanatory symbols. You and I have been chattering these years — do we ever call one another by a name? There is no need to do so; and there was no need to do so with the people of my dream."

He halted, regarding me.

"Do you believe in reincarnation?" said he.

"Do not push casual mountains on my head," I replied, "but get on with the dream."

"Well," said he, "I dreamed a dream, and here is the dream."

CHAPTER II.

My mind was full of disquietude, impatience, anger; and as the horse stretched and eased under me I dwelt on my own thought.

I did not pursue it, for I was not actively thoughtful. I hatched it. I sat on a thought and kept it warm and alive without feeling any desire to make it grow.

"She shall end it to-day," I thought in summary.

And then:

I'll end it to-day.

And then I ceased thinking, for an act had been accomplished, and I became a person on a horse; listening to the horse; looking at it; feeling it with my limbs and feeling myself by its aid.

There was great pleasure in the way my legs gripped around that warm barrel; in the way my hands held the beast's head up; in the way my waist and loins swayed and curved with the swaying and curving of the animal. I touched her with my toe and tapped her neck; and on the moment she tossed her head, shaking a cascade of mane about my hands; gathered her body into a bunch of muscles, and unloosed them again in a great gallop; while from behind the hooves of my servant's beast began to smack and pelt.

In some reaches the surrounding country flowed into and over the track; and evreywhere in its length the grass threw a sprinkle of green. There were holes here and there; but, more generally, there were hollows which had been holes, and which had in time accumulated driftage of one kind or another, so that they had a fullish appearance without having anything of a level look; but, on the whole, I knew of worse roads, and this one was kept in tolerable repair.

Not far from this place we left the road and struck along a sunken path all grown over at the top with shadowing trees; and so to another and much better-kept road, and on this one I took out the reins and we went galloping.

It was not unknown to me, this place. Indeed, it was so well known that I had no necessity to look to one side or the other, for everything that was to be seen, had been seen by me many hundreds of times; and if we except grass and trees and grzaing cattle, there was nothing to be seen.

Here and there rude dwellings came to view — low shanties patched together with mud and rock, and all browned and baked by the sun and the rain; and, as I rode, these small habitations became more numerous, and from them dogs and children swarmed, snarling and yelping and squealing.

Again these fell behind, and on another turn a great park

came to the view; and across it a building showed gaunt and massive, with turrets at the corners and in front, and the black silhouettes of men were moving in those airy tops.

CHAPTER III.

My horse pulled up, all spread-eagled and snorting, before a flight of stone steps, before which and on which armed men were clustered and pacing, and I went up those steps as one having right of entry. At the top I stood for an instant to look back on the rolling grass through which I had galloped a minute before.

The evening was approaching. Ragged clouds, yet shot with sunlight, were piling in the sky, and there was a surmised but scarcely perceptible greyness in the air. Over the grass silence was coming, almost physically, so that the armed rattle and tramp and the chatter of voices about me had a detached sound, as though these were but momentary interruptions of the great silence that was on its way. That quietude, premonition of silence, brings with it a chill to the heart, as though an unseen presence whispered something unintelligible, but understood; conveying a warning that the night comes, that silence comes, that an end comes to all movement of mind and limb.

For when I parted from my horse I parted from my mood; and was again a discontented person, filled with an impatience that seethed within me as water bubbles in a boiling pot.

"She," I thought, "shall choose to-day whether she likes to or not."

And, having expressed itself, my will will set in that determination as a rock is set in a stream.

A person came to my beckoning finger, and replied to my inquiry:

"Your honor is expected. Will your honor be pleased to follow me?"

She was sitting in a midst of the company, and on my approach gave me her hand to kiss. I saluted it half-kneeling, and raking her eyes with a savage stare, which she returned with the quiet constancy to which I was accustomed, and which always set me wild, so that the wish I had to beat her was only layed by the other and overflowing desire I had to kiss her.

I rose to my feet, stepped some paces back, and the conversation I had interrupted recommenced.

I was intensely aware of her and of myself; but, saving for us, the place was empty for me. I could feel my chin sinking to my breast; feel my eyes strained upwards in my bent face; feel my body projecting itself against the lips I stared at; and I knew that she was not unaware of me.

As she spoke, her eyes strayed continually to me, carelessly, irresistibly, and swung over or under me, and would not look at me. She could do that while she was talking, but while she was listening she could only half do it; for when her tongue was stilled, I caught her mind or her body, and held her and drew her; so that, would she or would she not, she had to look at me. And I delighted in that savage impression of myself upon her; following her nerves with the cunning of one who could see within her; and guiding her, holding her, all the time to me, to me, to me . . . And then she looked, and I was baffled anew; for her eye was as light, as calm, as inexpressive, as the bright twinkle of a rain-drop that hangs and shivers on a twig.

But the game was broken by a tap on my shoulder, and, at the moment, her voice stumbled on the word she was uttering, her eyes leaped into mine and lookd there, and then she was talking again, and merry and gracious.

It is a little difficult to explain these things, for I can give no name to the people I am speaking of; nor can I say how I was known to them; but I knew their names and qualities well, and they knew mine; so, at the tap on my shoulder, I, knowing whom I should see, turned my eyes to that direction, and saw, for our brows were level, a golden head, great blue eyes, and, just under the rim of vision, a great pair of shoulders.

Everything about him was great in bulk and in quality, and, with the exception of our mistress, I had never met one so founded in strength and security as he was.

We turned amicably and went from the room together; out of the great building and across the fields; and as our feet moved rhythmically in the grass we smiled at each other, for, indeed, I loved him as my own soul, and he loved me no less.

CHAPTER IV.

As we paced in long, slow strides, the darkness had already begun to be visible, for the second half of twilight was about us. Away in the direction towards which we trod an ashen sky kept

yet a few dull embers, where, beyond sight, down on the rim of the horizon, the sun had set.

There was silence, except for the innumerable rustling breed of grass and quiet trees, and a wind too delicate to be heard and scarcely to be felt; for, though the skies were brisk, there was but little ground wind. Naught moved in the trees but the high, tender branches that swayed lazily and all alone; leading their aery existence so far from my turbulence of passion that I chid them for their carelessness of one who, in the very cleft of anxiety, could find an instant to remember them in.

At a time, even while we strode forward, we turned again and retraced our steps; and my mind took one shade more of moodiness. It was he had turned, and not I. It was he always who did the thing that I was about to do one moment before I could do it; and he did it unthinkingly, assuredly, with no idea that rebellion might be about him; or that, being there, it could become manifest.

We re-entered, and sat to meat with a great company, and she spoke to us equally and frankly, and spoke to others with the gracious ease which was never for a moment apart from her.

But I, brooding on her, intent on her as with internal ears and eyes and fingers, felt in her an unwonted excitement, touched something in her which was not usual. When she looked at me, that feeling was intensified; for her bright, brief glance, masked as it was and careless as it seemed, held converse with me, as though in some realm of the spirit we were in unguarded communion.

We were close together then; nearer to each other than we would be again; so close that I could feel with a pang by what distance we might be separated; and could feel with doubled woe that she grieved for that which she could not comfort.

We left the table.

Little by little the company separated into small companies, and in a while the great room was boisterous with conversation. They had withdrawn and were talking earnestly together; and I was roving about the room, sitting for a breath with this company and that; listening to my neighbors with an ear that was hearkening elsewhere; and replying to them in terms that might not have been relevant to the subject I chanced on.

But in all my movements I managed to be in a position from which I could watch those two; so close in converse, so grave in their conduct of it; so alive to all that was happening about them;

and yet sunk spheres below the noise and gaiety of our companions.

Her eye looked into mine, calling to me; and at the signal I left my sentence at its middle and went towards them.

Crossing the room, I had a curious perception of their eyes as they watched me advancing; and, for the first time, I observed the gulf which goes about all people and which isolates each irreparably from his fellows. A sense of unreality came upon me, and, as I looked on them, I looked on mystery; and they, staring at me, saw the unknown walking to them on legs. At a stroke we had become strangers, and all the apprehension of strangers looked through our eyes.

She arose when I came within a few paces of them.

"Let us go out," said she.

And we went out quietly.

CHAPTER V.

Again I was in the open. I breathed deeply of the chill air as though drawing on a fount of life; as though striving to draw strength and sustenance and will into my mind.

But the time had come to put an end to what I thought of evasively as "all this"; for I was loath to submit plainly to myself what "all this" noted. I took my will in my hand, as it were, and became the will to do, I scarcely knew what; for to one unused to the discipline and use of will there is but one approach to it, and it is through anger. The first experience of willing is brutal; and it is as though a weapon of offence, a spear or club, were in one's hand; and as I walked I began to tingle and stir with useless rage.

For they were quiet, and against my latent impetuosity they opposed that massive barrier from which I lapsed back helplessly.

Excitement I understood and loved; the quicker it mounted, the higher it surged, the higher went I. Always above it, master of it. Almost I was excitement incarnate; ready for anything that might befall, if only it were heady and masterless. But the quietude of those left me like one in a void, where no wing could find a grip and where I scarce knew how to breathe.

It was now early night.

The day was finished, and all that remembered the sun had gone. The wind, which had stirred faintly in tall branches, had lapsed to rest. No breath moved in the world, and the clouds that

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had hurried before were quiet now, or were journeying in other regions of air. Clouds there were in plenty; huge pilings of light and shade; for a great moon, burnished and thin, and so translucent that a narrowing of the eyes might almost let one peer through it, was standing far to the left; and in the spaces between the clouds there was a sharp, scarce glitter of stars.

There was more than light enough to walk by; for that great disc of the heavens poured a radiance about us that was almost as bright as day.

Now, as I walked, the rage that had begun to stir within ceased again, and ther crept into me so dull a lassitude that had death stalked to us in the field I should not have stepped from his way.

I surrendered everything on the moment; and, for the mind must justify conduct, I justified myself in the thought that nothing was worth this trouble; and that nothing was so desirable but it could be matched elsewhere, or done without.

It is true that the mind thinks only what desire dictates; and that when desire flags, thought will become ignoble. My will had flagged, for I had held it too many hours as in a vice; and I was fatigued with that most terrible of exercises.

The silence of those indomitable people weighed upon me; and the silence of the night, and the chill of that large, white moon, burdened me also. Therefore, when they came to talk to me, I listened peacefully — if one may term that state of surrender peace. I listened in a cowardly quietness; replying more by a movement of the hands than by words; and when words were indispensable, making brief use of them.

It was she spoke, and her tone was gentle and anxious and official:

"We have arranged to marry," said she.

To that I made no reply.

I took the information on the surface of my mind as one receives an arrow on a shield, and I did not permit it to enter further. There, in neutral ground, the sentence lay; and there I could look on it with the aloof curiosity of one who examines an alien thing.

"They were going to get married!" Well... But what had it to do with me? Everyone got married sometime, and they were going to get married! This was a matter in which I took no part, for they were not going to get married to me; they were going to marry each other; it was all no business of mine. (*To be continued*).

THE OTHERS PARADE

BY GORHAM B. MUNSON

It sometimes happens that in looking over a literary period we discover that it is not one book or one author or several books or several authors who constitute the gathering points or rallying places for the different species of activity in that period. We are quite as likely to find that certain magazines were centers through which all the lines of a given circle of literary production passed. Thus, in the decade 1912 to 1922 three magazines may be said to be the three focal centers. Two of them, *The Seven Arts* and *The Soil*, represented two forms of nationalistic endeavor in the arts. The third was called *Others*, a title explained by the motto: "The old expressions are with us always And there are always Others." The "And" is important, for it recognizes the validity and permanence of the standard forms of expression. At the same time there is always the effort to extend the resources of the language, to invent new forms, to discover novelties. In short, *Others* existed for those interested in experimental writing and this limitation of focus gave it a more purely aesthetic character than *The Seven Arts* or *The Soil*. T. S. Eliot has said that culture is traditional and craves novelty. *Others* granted the traditional its rights and attempted to satisfy the craving for novelty.

So in a broad way the writers for *Others* were united, but it was too broad a principle to justify critics labelling them as a "group" or a "school." In one of the late issues of *Others* the editors tried to dispel this tendency. "It has been said in many places that the contributors to *Others* (magazine or anthologies) are members of a group, a school. This is not true. Collectively or separately, they eschew everything which approximates ismism. Any one is free to come in or stay out of the magazine, subject of course to the none-too-infallible judgment of the editors. The curriculum is taboo: the only question asked is: 'Does a man express himself, and if so, how well?' If the editors escape seeing or hearing some worthy, set it down to temporary incapacity on their part, and pray for their early recovery. They do not sit on judicial or pedantic pedestals; primarily, they ask

that they be permitted to evolve their own individualism, if they possess any, and to permit other folk to evolve theirs. They are editors in name only." The policy of *Others*, we see, rested on taste: it was unpretentious and it was romantic. *The Seven Arts* had for its ideal, arts that would express the national community, or more particularly, the latent America its editors believed existed. *The Soil* claimed that we already had an American art in our Panama Canal, our baseball fields, our comic strips and vaudeville shows, our locomotives and skyscrapers. But *Others* asked only that an individual express himself and tested his individual expression for excellence of rendering.

The issue of *Others* for January, 1919, carried a reproduction of a painting by Samuel Halpert called *Interior* and ran the following note on the painting: "The interior shows two of the three rooms of the shack in Grantwood, N. J., occupied in the year 1913, by Messrs. Halpert, Ray and Kreymborg. The gentleman at the easel is Man Ray. It was in this shack that *The Glebe*—forerunner of *Others*—was born; and it was to this shack that a husky butcher parcel—a parcel wrapped in the tough paper used exclusively by butchers—came. The parcel was postmarked London and it contained the mss. of the first Imagist Anthology—edited by Ezra Pound. A few strides away from this shack stands another shack. In the summer of 1915, it was the birthplace of *Others*." *Others* was to have been fathered by Walter Conrad Arensberg and Alfred Kreymborg, but Arensberg withdrew and Kreymborg was printed on the first number in July, 1915, as the sole editor.

The number consisted of sixteen pages of poems by Mary Carolyn Davies, Mina Loy, Orrick Johns, Horace Holley and Alfred Kreymborg. It was small enough to slip into a coat pocket and it cost only twenty-three dollars. I do not know how many times larger an issue of *Scribner's* is or how many times more expensive. But it takes no sagacity to know that Kreymborg's "magazine of the new verse" was a vastly more important venture for the advancement of letters than *Scribner's* or *Harper's* and the *Century*, for that matter. As Kreymborg once said: "One wanted in those days a private paper where one could see the work of 'unknowns.' That is all that *Others* provided." But some of the unknown in *Others* were later to be known as distinguished poets.

And some have been completely and alas deservedly forgotten.

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Alanson Hartpence who declaimed:

"I seek my revenge in the stars,
The quiet knowing stars.
I seek my revenge in the night,
The solemn truthful night.
And all the infinitude of space
Comes to aid in my revenge, etc., etc."

Jeanne D'Orge with her sentimental *Meat Press*.

"I have a longing
To strip raw live flesh
From my bones
And squeeze it in the meat press.
Blood will drip,
Enough to write a few lyrics
Red and sacramental."

Part of the *Others* file is indeed a graveyard and in it one reads the names of Daphne Carr, Skipwith Cannell, Anne Blair, Alice Groff, Adolf Wolf, Robert Swasey, etc., etc. Their poems were their untimely epitaphs. Regrettably too often *Others* pitted mere triflings, poets who played with their toes, against the solemnities of the large standard magazines. In illustration I cite *Fingers*, by Orrick Johns.

"I've ten fingers
Very much admired,
I shall frame them
For they cannot do anything:
They cannot earn dinner
Or even hold a pebble . . .
Pebbles are pretty falling through them."

I hope that I am not suspected of malice in thus raking up well-forgotten bones. The point is that if a magazine does not have some more definite norm of excellence than *Others* did, it is likely to print at times extremely soft and childish outpourings. On the

other hand, the publication of a single fine poem such as Wallace Stevens' *Le Monocle de mon Oncle* or Eliot's *Portrait of a Lady* or William Carlos Williams' *Tract* atones—more than atones—for the inconsequential exhibits.

Furthermore, the dominant tone of *Others* was a mixture of insouciance, good workmanship, and exciting discovery. The venture came at the time of the *vers libre* craze. Ezra Pound in London had propagandized for *vers libre* and fostered the local school of imagism. Amy Lowell cheapened what she discovered in London and returning to America shouted masterfully for free verse. She made more stir than Pound and as what she wrote seemed easy and was easy, the cult of *verse libre* spread like Spanish influenza. Max Eastman called the work of this cult "lazy verse" which was proper as an indictment of many individual practitioners but improper as an indictment of the school they wished to emulate. Finally, Eliot was obliged sternly to remark that no *vers* is *libre* to the man who does an honest job. But in any case there was a small wave of mass-enthusiasm for free verse and it was upon the unstable top of this wave that *Others* was buoyed up and rushed forward. Its thirty issues contain most of the good free verse of its lifetime and, all allowances made, surprisingly little of the tons of bad free verse emitted in those now quaint days.

For a time *Others* with the backing of John Marshall came out each month. In the second number appeared *Peter Quince at the Clavier* by Wallace Stevens and several poems by William Carlos Williams, who was destined to play a vigorous role in the development of the organ. The third number introduced T. S. Eliot, John Gould Fletcher, Maxwell Bodenheim and Walter Conrad Arensberg. The fourth was devoted to the Choric School whose attempt to associate dancing with poetry was explained in a foreword by Ezra Pound. Simultaneously, the magazine grew in other ways: two hundred and fifty people had the perspicacity to subscribe and the printing at times reached one thousand copies. Jeers and handclaps greeted the young poets.

In the spring of 1916 the editorial staff expanded to include William Carlos Williams, Helen Hoyt, Maxwell Bodenheim and Alanson Hartpence as associate editors, and the new contributors included Amy Lowell, Carl Sandburg, Conrad Aiken, Marianne Moore, Edgar Lee Masters, Padraic Colum, Witter Bynner, Benja-

min De Casseres, and even Emanuel Morgan and Elijah Hay of Spectra hoax fame. A Spanish-American number was brought out and then—the WAR. *Others* suspended to be resuscitated in December, 1918. From that date until it died of disgust in July, 1919, it was managed by Kreymborg and three associate editors: Lola Ridge, William Saphier and Dorothy Kreymborg—to whom were soon added Orrick Johns and as art editor William Zorach. Among the discoveries during this final period were Evelyn Scott, Marsden Hartley, Wallace Gould, Yvor Winters and Emanuel Carnevali.

Our chronicle of the simple facts of the existence of *Others* must include mention of certain things which grew out of the magazine proper. These were the three *Others Anthologies*, which preserved in more permanent form the best poems printed in the magazine; the Others Theatre, which played briefly at the little Bramhall Playhouse in New York, and the Others Lecture Bureau, organized by William Saphier, Mitchell Dawson and kindred workers. Under its auspices Lola Ridge, Conrad Aiken, Alfred Kreymborg and William Carlos Williams toured the Middle West.

Before dealing with the remarkable death of *Others*, it may be advisable to try to dissipate the wonder of the reader at this attempt to revisualize a bit of recent literary history in America. I try to make pass before us again that queer parade called *Others* because the American reader has little historical sense. He sees things happen, but he never relates them—and he is always forgetting what went before. The result is that our milieu always appears more disorderly than it actually is. *Others* is still important in my opinion because it was the one point in the last decade to which the energies of certain poets I think important converged. I refer to Eliot, Pound, Kreymborg, Moore, Stevens and Williams. It helped to launch these writers, it gave them a coterie of admirers and provided other valuable contacts. The forces hinted at in *Others* are still playing about in our milieu and shaping us in ways that in comparison with the effects achieved in *Others* appear grandiose.

Paradoxically, the death of *Others* was its most vital act. "*Others* has come to an end," wrote William Carlos Williams, who compiled and edited the final number. "I object to bringing out another issue after this one. *Others* is not enough. It has grown inevitably to be a lie, like everything else that has been a truth at

one time. I object to its puling 4x6 dimension. I object to its yellow cover, its stale legend. Everything we have ever done or can do under these conditions is being done now by any number of other MAGAZINES OF POETRY! Others has been blasted out of existence. We must have a new conception from the bottom up or I will not touch it."

At the back was a fiercely-uttered supplement entitled *Belly Music*, also by Williams. "I am in the field against the stupidity of the critics writing in this country about poetry today." He pointed out harshly the deficiencies in the poetry magazines and yelled: "How IS one to go about getting something done in this welter? In the first place—although it was not true five years ago—all the 'good stuff' there is to print does somehow get upon the page in some crazy fashion today." He attacked the vogue of the "lovely," and set against it such statements as: "Poets have written of the big leaves and the little leaves, leaves that are red, green, yellow and the one thing they have never seen about a leaf is that it is a little engine. It is one of the things that make a plant GO. . . . He (the poet) writes in order to escape the mechanical perfection of sheer existence. He writes to assert himself above every machine and every mechanical conception that seeks to bind him. He writes to free himself, to annihilate every machine, every science, to escape defiant through consciousness and accuracy of emotional expression. . . . the mark of a great poet is the extent to which he is aware of his time and NOT, unless I be a fool, the weight of loveliness in his meters. . . . To think means to stop singing only when you deny the power of release in thought." As for the critics, "I bunch them all as one. They are all sophomoric, puling, nonsensical. Take the best of them, Aiken, A. C. H., Hackett, Amy Lowell, what do their criticisms amount to more than an isolated perception of certain values? They pick over the dead bones. Never is their criticism a new SIGHT of a SOURCE, a flash into the future of art, wings under which a poet might spread his sparrow's wings and mount to the sky! They SEE nothing. It is never a confidence in the purgation by thought. It is a puling testiness in most cases or a benign ignorance in others of the purpose of the work with which they are dealing. Imagine a man actually sensing the inspiration that is in a poem. Never. His path must be sopped of rain water, the edges cut free of even the

long grass, the way paved and SWEPT before an American critic will walk into a new work. Where is a man who has a head for smashing through underbrush? I not only want him, I demand him. With the help of a real critic the work that even a small group, such an inadequate group as the OTHERS could swing would have at least the beginnings of that splendor which—would be so out of place in America, like J. P. Morgan's watch chain! There is not the whisper of protest. There are only salaried employees of GREAT magazines who try to get radical stuff into their masters' periodicals when they are able to or the budget allows."

I quote so extensively from Williams' statements, the writing of "one who slips back at last with savage resentment—like a beast with a bone in his throat," because his buried manifesto is one of the most vigorous, generative and relevant our contemporaries have nailed up before us, and because the courageous end of *Others* is an example which all the moribund magazines in this country ought promptly to follow. What American magazine today has a new conception from the bottom up?



"DRAPED HEAD"

Photographed by Peter A. Juley & Son

MAX WEBER



"THE CANDELABRA TREE"

Photographed by Peter A. Juley & Son

MAX WEBER

M A D N E S S

BY ALLEN TATE

The wardrobe towers above the table lamp,
The harpsichord stands sentinel between;
The clock's tin argument whines out its damp
Terror, like an eyelid winking through a screen.

Young bats around the hills like sands are whirring
Past clouds of roosting vultures sick with flight,
Till the rag carpet on the hardwood stirring
Wrinkles to winds which are a swift delight.

Impanelled walls, raging with gloom, abound
In commonplaces to moralize the eye —
Which are white cats whose slick metallic sound
Cuts to the heart with a half-completed lie.

And ladies with their nails prepared for tea
And sunken barques that coast the shores of hell
And old men vacant of propriety
Have faintly rung a next-door neighbor's bell.

On the iron cot the coverlets are neat
With the bold care of an ecstatic trull
Who rearranges with impartial feet
The silence in the caverns of a skull.

SONGS OF COWARDICE

BY GLADYS EDGERTON

I.

Sparks of cold white fire
Dance over the black sea,
Make mock of the licking greed
Of its waves.

II.

Her soft mouth smiles,
Her eyes cling,
She hugs her watery heart
That is a afraid to beat.

III.

He quenched the fire of his eyes
Lest it scorch her loveliness,
Now, blind, he weeps
In the shadow of her fragrant breasts.

IV.

Alone — —
The throb of silence,
The stinging caress
Of passion-crumpled wings.



LINOLEUM CUT

ANNE MERRIMAN PECK

TWO POEMS

BY HAZEL REEVE

SONNET

Have you a wine to fill this widest heart,
Either of Love'n or any other skin?
Speak — that I seek no farther for an art
Equal to my desire and discipline.
Name no estate or creed; it will not weigh
When you are fiercely broken on the wheel
Of common life and ordinary day,
Vaunt not your beauty, but confine your zeal
To narrowest limits for your martyrdom
In the lean prison and on whirring fires
Fed by the brake of what all loves become.
If you can please my rigorous desires,
Make known the time of year, the hour, and where,
That we, with pen and seal, may make our contract
there.

FROM THE GREEK OF MELEAGER

Never again shall I,
Goat-foot Pan,
Stay on the ridges
Where Daphnis ran.
What can be dear to me,
Now that death
Destroyed his fair young
Body's breadth?
In the close city
I shall keep
And watch men arm
For chase and leap —
Nor hill nor valley span
Hold what was dear to Pan.

ON AESTHETICS

By ALAIN

Translated from the French by Joseph T. Shipley

GREEK PROFILE

Gargoyle monsters resemble the human countenance so closely that we should tremble. The Greek god resembles the human countenance so closely that we may be consoled. These are two imitations of nature both of them true. The monster shows in its way that the human body is animal; the god signifies that the body is intellectual. The one invites us to mistrust ourselves, and it is true that we should mistrust ourselves; the other bids us trust ourselves, and it is true that we should trust. They are two models: one, of ungoverned expression; the other, of expression controlled. On one hand, the profligate body; on the other, the body recaptured by music and gymnastic games. One, the spirit divided; one, reconciled.

In the animal profile the nose, as Hegel remarks, is at the service of the mouth; this double system, the function of which is to scent, to seize, to devour, thrusts forth a search; the forehead and eyes draw back. The sculptors of the great epoch did not ill-design their god, choosing that facial form in which the nose seems hung from the forehead, separated from the mouth. Of the mouth, the same author comments that two movements can press their form on it: those of speech, which are voluntary, and those which I venture to call intestinal. Either the visceral reflex will dominate, or the gymnastic control. In fact, a receding, loose chin and a hanging lip at once suggest the animal. From this it follows that an architectural chin, set forth and muscled powerfully, indicates a governing spirit; what there is limp in mouth must depend on gymnastic development; the expressive mouth is always sustained by a Herculean chin. Friendliness is thus united with force. The brilliance of eyes, the speech of a prisoned soul, is out of place in these potent forms; so all propriety bids us moderate the ambiguous signals so frequent in the eyes of a dog or a gazelle. Thus the marble hero sends his mute lesson afar.

This may well be, you respond. But if I am born with a pug-nose and an invisible chin, what can I do about it? To which I reply that a well-handled face is always nearer the appropriate proportions than it may seem at first glance; because its movements, expressions, grimaces, are more striking than its underlying form—from which fact caricature draws its effects, fixing the movement in the form. But it must be added that he who cannot control his face, readily presents a caricature of himself, especially when envy, irony or cruelty are imprinted on a smooth mask. The Greek form, then, must be accepted as master of movement. Out of such a controlled face another man will appear, the true man; but I believe that gymnastics in harmony with the human countenance will always slightly change the form itself and that this change will suffice to reconcile the two. But I see many men who are the dupes of their own face.

OF METAPHOR

Metaphor is more ancient than comparison. The opposite might seem true at first thought, considering Homer and his famous similes as at the beginning of human history, metaphors would then be condensed similes, as if some one wrote "the torrent of eloquence" instead of developing the two terms: "As a torrent . . . so is eloquence." I considered this the case, at the time when I was dreaming of writing on metaphors; it was because I had not learned one must always probe more deeply. For far beyond Homer crowds a world that speaks through tales, proverbs, parables, statues, temples, and always through metaphor.

True proverbs, for example, are pure metaphors. They are not merely condensed similes: one of the terms is entirely missing. "People in glass houses shouldn't throw stones." Many parables bear the same stamp, in that the idea is expressed in the form of an object, without commentary; the fable of the frogs who wanted a king is of that type, although after it, as after most of the fables, and in a sense below the picture, some grammarian—I imagine—has written a moral. It is in the same way that we have wanted to give a name to some of Beethoven's sonatas. But in ancient usage there is never an idea alongside the image; rather the idea is within the image, inseparable from it. The biblical parables often bear the mark of the grammarian; they develop in the fashion of

similes. Others, like Sphinxes, are older in style, and more venerable, such as that of the fig tree that was cursed because it bore no figs, "and it was not the season of figs." I think that I have divined that enigma, but I wish to be in no haste to explain. Undoubtedly, like the proverbs, it has more than one meaning; and one may well fear lest, in taking to himself what he sees, he lose irreparably what he has not yet divined.

It is likely that the most ancient symbols are wordless, and therefore wholly metaphorical; more than that, they are metaphorical involuntarily, if I may use the term. For example, a tomb in ancient times was no more than a pile of stones that protected the corpse from wolves. The more friends the dead man had, the higher the heap of stones. Such were the first pyramids; and undoubtedly the weight and form of the stones gave the first suggestion of those precise forms, which the piety of friends could but complete. But, complete or not, these tombs were from the first potent symbols; these written characters—among man's oldest—were thus set down before mankind could read them; but every time man has tried to read them a new idea was enclosed with the dead: thus the cult was born, out of which was to rise religion, that broke the tombs and, setting free the idea, thought to liberate the soul—and the metaphor was reborn from its own ashes, like the Phoenix, king of metaphors.

GREEK TEMPLE

The Pyramid is the symbol of death. Very evidently, by virtue of its form, that of the mountains. Let gravity exert itself, and the stone-heap will assume the pyramidal form. That form is thus the ultimate tomb of every structure; but the frightening idea is that the architect has voluntarily built in the form of death, seeking duration there, as though life were a brief perturbation; which is what these restrained statues also represent; but the Pyramid is a much more perfect image of eternal inaction, announcing to the spectator the invisible, undiscoverable mummy. That concordance between the idea and the image strikes all the chords of man, and makes them resound in perfect harmony, from the first glance; I have been told that the Pyramids are among the most beautiful things one can see, and I well believe it.

The Greek temple is the symbol of life. Everything is a challenge upraised against gravitation. The column, in its propor-

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tions and all its parts, indicates that it supports; the right angle, the sign of the builder, reigns supreme; nothing falls; the entire mass refuses to meet the ground in those sloping lines which blind forces trace. So speaks the joyous, wide portico, open to the winds: the way of life. The very slant of the roof, so boldly upraised and supported, resting in the air on its sharp edges, is a refusal to endure at the price of submission. The balanced effort, the active idea, in the measure of man—for immensity, the superhuman, they do not seek. Socrates and Plato smiled upon this house of man, symbol of the survey, sign of geometry, but apart from man, and yielding free play to that other symbol, to the athletic god, perfect image of thought reconciled with life.

On the high places the temple breathes like a man. The highways of the land, the highways of the sea, appear between its columns, in intercepted moving images; the crowd finds vigor in this air and in these vistas; its laws are rich with invention. Here processions grow live with thought; hence the variety and grace of the friezes, sensitive even in the least fold of drapery; everything breathes a chant of joyous freedom, forgetfulness, renewal. All is springtide adventurous; all is pagan; that word has had meaning but once. This beauty still speaks; and the empty temple still sends through its columns, over its stairs, the cry of the athlete, and the Olympian stir. Nothing inward, nothing toward the mystery of death, but outward; for it is not the tomb of the spirit, which rather rises therefrom and takes its flight, like adventuresome Athene ever harnessing her horses, ever reaching for the whip. Abode of the watchful spirit, open to the four winds, inflexibly smiling form. Sole image in the world, of liberty within law.

THE IMMOBILE

Art expresses human power by immobility. There is no better symbol of spiritual force than the immobile, as soon as one discerns the thought within it. On the other hand, in all manner of movement ambiguity resides: in a galloping horse one cannot tell whether desire or fear directs, whether in charge or in flight; and instantaneous photographs taken at race-tracks have revealed a maddened beast, instead of the powerful, supple, assured conqueror one seemed to see. In the warrior in action, the signs of terror and despair recur; not even isolate; rather, violent action always suggests the

madman's frenzy. Therefore the true image of power is the presentation of resistance, almost of meditation. Silent and unheeding in the face of the continuous buffets of life, not spying like a frightened animal, but seeing and hearing only at his will: such is the hero. Of whom the statue was the first model, for it changes never.

Men are astonished at the potency of beautiful portraits; it lies in their indifference to flies and flutterings, to prayers, to admiration. Not that they express little; but they express according to the harmony of their being, not according to assaults from without. That is why it is difficult to paint action. In truth, the only painter of action is the dance; and one soon discovers in all dancing a guest of the immobile within the movement—which is the law of the dance. In music, which is far bolder in its attempt to imprison change, the law is still more strict, exacting recommencement and return. A single tone holds all of music, constant and immobile in change. If noise, which is change and nothing more, enters into music, at once some rhythmic law is required, the more simple and imperious the more noisy the noise. I observe the same immobility in the rolling of a drummer as in his posture; the same immobility and the same will.

What is related of the ancient mimes, scarcely credible though it be, reveals that they stirred the multitudes by repose, not by movement. And everyone, watching an effective actor, even a comic performer, will remark that movement, in his playing, is but the passage from one immobility to another. The scene does not receive the stir, but rather—and still more noticeably in crowds—a succession of tableaux in which, by some choreographic law, the movement itself is obliterated. Of this, the art of the screen supplies a ready proof by contrary; for perpetual movement is the fundamental law of its productions; not merely because speech is basically missing—it must be recognized that to be born mute does not imply silence; but chiefly because the actor feels obliged to stir about restlessly, as though in homage to the mechanical invention.

IDOLS

The spirit within a thing, that is the god. A clock in its wheels and balances tells me the mind of the clockmaker; but there is naught marvelous in that: every wheel says but one thing. Whereas La Joconde tells much more than the painter imagined. A beautiful statue has a meaning without end; cloistral vaults have thousands of aspects, all kindred to ourselves. A Beethoven quartet takes on more meaning year by year. All these works, beyond the immense thought which is their own, and which forever leaps beyond our grasp, bear on as well all the adoration, all the homage they have received, like those altars made more venerable with wreaths. Time will never wear down that future of glory. I have read the Iliad once again; it is as though I had carried another stone to its great monument.

When the barbarian had hewn his blocks of bassalt into the semblance of the human form, he could not judge his work; on the contrary it was he who was judged. Those eyes of stone were stronger than he. That fixed immobility held his respect more surely than a despot; for a despot changes his posture and his place, and ultimately desires and demands; but statues have no need of us, nor of anything. Thus the statue was a god. I should term "prayer" that meditation before the symbol, that offering which is due yet which the god needs not, that mute dialog in which, on one side, all answers are made beforehand, all queries divined. Thus the thought knows whither it is journeying, and truth is revealed in immobility.

It has been said that man has made idols because he is religious; that is as though one said he has made instruments because he is wise; but on the contrary science is no more than the observation of instruments and of work done by means of them. So I should rather say that the first contemplation had the idol as object, and that man was religious because he made idols. He had to explain the potency of the sign, and invent mythology to account for beauty. The Imitation of Christ is no more than the abstract transformation of the imitation of the sign, which is ceremony. Reflection on the idol eventually denies the idol, by the very perfections divined in it; but that is already impiety. The iconoclast ultimately finds himself without a god. On that side dwells perfection without body; this

nothingness sends us back to the idol, the new object of a purified adoration; this is the art of our day, a moment—as Hegel says—exceeded yet preserved.

The methods of this philosopher, who progresses always by position, negation and solution, were thus the instruments of history. Those who have too hastily dismissed this dialectic should reflect that Comte, who also misunderstood, finally came to express in other terms the same relationships. For, according to his views, daily more clearly established, the ancient fetichism was the true essential religion, while the thoughtout, purified religion was but its negation, which, under the name of theology and metaphysics, drew the god out of the sign, even out of the temple, itself a sign, and flung us into a bodiless infinite, from which we must at once recoil. Then it is that, in a positive sense, the ancient fetichism, under the name of esthetic contemplation, will come to adorn the co-operative life, that is itself the negation of negation.

THE SCHOOL OF JUDGMENT

Man has scarcely any judgment, but humanity is infallible. Who goes to the Salons, is damned; who goes to the Museums, is saved. There is nothing more amusing than the sort of bewildered frenzy that overcomes a man of taste when he constitutes himself a Critic. For it is true that the great body of treasured works uplifts the spirit and yields it the gift of beauty; but it is no less true that this mass of works reveals not the slightest inkling of a rule by which to judge. I can readily recognize the beautiful, in Beethoven, in Michel Angelo, in Shakspeare; but I cannot in the least discern it in this new piece of music, in that fresh painting, in yesterday's play. Our imagination is too strong; judgment lets fly in the moment's humor, and this first opinion covers the whole work as with a veil. Hesitant at first, wavering; then suddenly firm, obstinant in its chance verdict: thus the spirit of man. The painters of the Institute are in general harshly treated by the critic; doubtless they were praised in other times. And often, high prices are paid for daubings of which one could easily say most anything ill. There is a grain of madness in all these judgments. Why, indeed, wish to judge at first sight, as though by instinct? Prejudice always watches and slips between. Why not wish to be predisposed, but well predisposed.

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I was once asked to listen to a short, unfamiliar piece by Beethoven, copied out by hand, without the author's name. I was prudent, I said nothing irreparable; but my judgment lacked assurance. There is but one means of guarding against such surprises: that is, to know everything. But it is better to recognize that the great works are always more powerful, more wholesome, in the brightness of glory. Who mistrusts himself only half judges, in a manner withholding. As though one resisted a dancing-master. Stiffness is not dancing. Or a riding-master It is a common fault to want to invent while learning. Michel Angelo, while hardly more than a child, was found copying an ancient statue; thus he toiled in love and grace, without resisting or withholding. It is in this way that one grows strong.

This paradox is striking in the Fine-Arts; and perhaps it is only the beautiful that humanizes. In all research, in spite of appearances, whether it be politics, physics, even geometry, one must know how to go to school, and go again, and not hurl oneself after the first objection that comes to hand; but always in that which is human to seek oneself; in short, to move in harmony with grandeur. Epicurean if I am reading Lucretius, Stoic with Marcus Aurelius, follower of the physics of Descartes. The errors of Descartes are right; they are on the right path. Leibnitz has not understood the "infinitely small" in their true sense; it's precisely there that I am learning, imitating that human activity, properly harmonized between the upper and the nether. The combined grace of body and mind which leaps in its inventions far ahead of proof, I shall win to by obedience. And I consider sublime the words of Michel Angelo, in his last years, when asked "Where are you hurrying, through the snow?" "To school," he responded, "to try to learn."

SHERWOOD ANDERSON: A MIDDLE-AGED ADOLESCENT

BY N. BRYLLION FAGIN

A vast continent is discovered — huge, immeasurable, seductive. People from an old world—measured and checkered-out and unromantic — flock to its shores; people tired of the Old World, the old religion, the old politics, the old home fields. They shake off the dust of their old soil, but it clings to their soul. They escape traditions, only to set them up again or replace them with newer ones. They greet the dawn of independence and look back with wistful eyes upon the familiar outlines of slavery

Earth is productive; the rocks, the woods, the streams, black loam — all are productive. People multiply; they move on; they spread out; they report accomplishment to the stick-in-the-muds back home. Others come. Woods are chopped down; farms, plantations, industries are developed. The Lord's hosts prosper everywhere. The whites conquer the reds and the blacks. The interior gives up its mystery — and its treasure. The germ of castes and outcasts stubbornly maintains itself; new divisions originate. Periods of depression; periods of war; periods of intense activity and elation. One hundred percentism, lurking in every mother's son, springs to the fore. I am better than you are: I am I, and you are only you. Burn the witches; expel the heretics; put up the bars at the gate! Our village for ourselves; our city for ourselves; our country for ourselves; our forests for ourselves; our fields for ourselves. Our homes are best; our ideas are best; our bible is best; our pie is best.

The frontier moves — vanishes. A vast complexity obliterates all traces of simple, instinctive action and reaction. Over three centuries of incessant, top-speed activity conquers the new continent and melts individual, national and primordial psychologies into fog. Here and there an emergent gleam. Now and then a clear voice. Then, questionings—puzzlings. Whence this light? Whose the voice? What portends it?

Three centuries of individual, economic, social, political life have their counterpart in three centuries of cultural life— blind, unconscious, underground. There is an aesthetic deposit some-

where — a reflection of moments, places, personalities, moods, ecstasies. The deposit is scanned; compared with the deposits of other continents; eulogized; condemned. One hundred percentism becomes a test. *We* have a culture. *Our* culture is as good as yours; it is better than yours; it is *ours*! It is this, and this, and this. It has the proud virtues of *me* and *mine*. If it has not, it is false; it is deficient in percentage; it is un-me and un-mine.

Then, suddenly, another light. Another voice out of the fog. It is familiar and strange. It has the accustomed words, but they make unaccustomed sense; it does not give the old reflection. And yet it lights familiar outlines. Puzzling. Anderson — what is he crying about? What does he want? Where did he borrow his gleam? Where did he steal his voice? Surely he is un-American. He must have known foreign voices; he must have met Dostoievsky, Chekhov, Thomas Hardy, Zola, Maupassant, Marcel Proust — at least D. H. Lawrence. Hasn't he seen the great deposit we have accumulated, particularly after the genial laughter of Dietrich Knickerbocker? And if he has, how dare he be so ungrateful? He never laughs, this fellow, except to scoff. He harbors the sin of bitterness against his betters. There is no pleasing him; there is no happiness in his soul. And the things he talks about! Study life, indeed! Hasn't the genial Howells studied life? But this fellow has gone 'way beyond Howells, meantime forgetting good taste and form and respectability. He's clumsy, that's what he is, and sick. He ought to be —

But there is something about him, after all. A kind of grim power, an earnestness—a feeling that he means well. He just makes you sit up, whether you want to or not. You can hurl curses at him, but you want to know what he says. Perhaps it is his sentimentality, even though we are not really sentimental, you know; we distinguish between sentiment and sentimentality. But then you can't really hate a sentimentalist; you try to, but it won't work.

"It does not yet show that Mr. Anderson can construct a large plot nor that he is still fumbling in the confusion of current life to get hold of something true and simple and to make it clear."*)

"He will shock many of his readers for some time to come, probably until he has ceased to experiment with human nature in the attempt to find its complete explanation."**)

*) Carl Van Dorn — *The Nation*, October 12, 1921.

**) Henry Sidel Canby — *The Literary Review*, February 24, 1923.

"Imperfect, ragged absurd — at moments dull;... also electrically alive, tragic, stirring, memorable." *)

"Yet, for all the feebleness, even flabbiness, of the texture,... it is not wholly devoid of the strange impressiveness which one finds in all Mr. Anderson's work." **)

"Then why, one asks oneself, in spite of so many lapses, so much obvious awkwardness in the handling of his material... so much rhetorical self-indulgence and lack of aesthetic arrangement has Mr. Anderson created for himself so large and unmistakable a following?" ***)

"There is, to be sure, Sherwood Anderson, who, with indefatigable curiosity about unprobed aspects of human nature, is laboring to convert the raw stuff of his experience into art. But granting the utmost that has been said of his promise, I cannot yet find evidence that he is contributing greatly... Yet the ideal and the effort count for something." ****)

"Mr. Anderson continues, with crude instruments and painful zeal, to work at his unreclaimed land, a fascinating, mysterious place, but a marsh none the less. Why can't he drain it?... They (his stories) are clumsy, slow-footed, reiterative, but somehow far more disturbing than the work of most far more competent, clear-headed writers." *****)

"...he is striving, and not too successfully thus far, to find a voice for the voiceless." *****)

"...his case (is) perennially and recurrently interesting, in spite of the unevenness of his work in detail, and the ambitious failures of his novels." *****)

.....
.....

Puzzling.

A native stranger at the gates. A clumsy fellow from the mid-west talking like a bewhiskered Russian, like a befogged Austrian physician, like an English Puritan mystic, like a French highbrow — talking shamelessly in mid-western accents What does he

*) Ludwig Lewinsohn — *The Nation*, March 28, 1923.

**) Edmund Wilson, Jr. — *The Dial*, April, 1923.

***) Alyse Gregory — *The Dial*, September, 1923.

****) Edith Rickert — *The English Journal*, October, 1923.

*****) Robert Littell — *The New Republic*, December 19, 1923.

*****) Isaac Goldberg — *Haldeman-Julius Weekly*, January 5, 1924.

*****) Robert Morss Lovett — *The Dial*, March, 1924.

contribute to our cultural deposit? It is a peculiar substance he is dropping onto the heap; it doesn't fit in with the rest of it. Our assay apparatus fails to function upon it. Our critical test-tubes break. Our hardened generalizations prove useless when applied to this fellow's literary product.

If only these strange phenomena would not happen! If only life would flow on in its accustomed channels and its literary reflection were always normal. How easy of comprehension everything would remain! How convenient to retain our critical old oaken buckets! But evidently life does change—mocks our classifications, upsets our calculations, displays a queer reflection. In horror we jump back. This isn't *me*; this isn't America! It is a freak reflection — a foreign influence. *We* haven't changed; America hasn't changed. We have always been the same. We *are* the same. We are going to be the same. This fellow Anderson's alien Russian gabbing can mean but one of two things: either that he has sold his soul to the Russians, or that we, America, have become considerably Russianized. Surely the latter possibility is out of the question?

And yet, we are no longer young — not quite so young as we were. Things have been changing considerably. Social, political, economic, religious and psychological conditions have been undergoing certain metamorphoses. On the surface everything remains the same, — the change is upsetting; but the rumbling of inner turmoil is quite audible. And inner turmoil leaves its scars on youth.

Russia is an old country, comparatively speaking. It has produced a literature characterized by a certain coloring, form and substance. Blind chance? More likely there have been certain conditions in the life of Russia which have contributed to the evolution of just such a literature. America is a young country, comparatively speaking. It has produced a literature characterized by a certain coloring, form and substance. Blind chance? More likely there have been certain fundamental conditions in the life of America which have contributed to the evolution of just such a literature. Instead of producing Dostoievskys, Tolstoys, Turgenevs, Chekhovs, Gorkys and Andreyevs, America has produced Longfellow, Bret Hartes, Richard Harding Davises, O. Henrys, Harold Bell Wrights and Zane Greys. Writing like a Russian means more than using a particular style of expression; it means having lived in a country characterized by a certain racial inheritance and a

specific environment, a type of government, an industrial development, a stage of education, a definite civilization. Writing like an American means more than employing a particular mannerism; it means reflecting the soul of a country with a certain history and temper, a stage of evolution, industrial and cultural, a definite civilization. If the type and stage of civilization be the same, why should not the literature give the same reflection?

What is a writer? An artist? Can he be defined, classified, catalogued, as a thing, a phenomenon, apart from life? His own? His country's? The world's? The life of his home? Of the ages? Through him speak forces — many, conflicting, known and unknown. To be sure there are exceptions — at least seeming exceptions. Thomas Hardy, an Englishman, surveys life with the pessimistic eyes of Leonid Andreyev, a Russian, or Anatole France, a Frenchman. Edgar Allan Poe and Herman Melville are products of the same country that produced Artemus Ward and Richard Harding Davis. What kinship is there between the Frenchman Romain Rolland and the American Ellis Parker Butler? And yet why is Henry James so reminiscent of one Gustave Flaubert? Thought and even temperament, in the larger sense, are not always racial, nor national, nor provincial. Life in all countries, among all races, sooner or later evokes the same tones, the same ecstasies.

A young republic, hopeful of building up a model country, a refuge for independence and freedom, flaunting in its slogans, on its banners, in its anthems, in its school-books, phrases such as "free and equal," "home of the brave and the free," "unlimited opportunity," could not produce an introspective, brooding literature. What need to search or analyze, to reflect or contemplate? Life is real, a fact, a deed. The password is "Onward," all the time. And when the time came when the East was populated and sufficiently exploited, there was still the hopeful admonition "Go West, young man!" People who work and strive towards a definite goal, towards a beckoning opportunity, need only an amusing story to while away an idle moment and an optimistic philosophy all the time. If the march becomes weary and a mood comes which questions its usefulness, it is stifled with a "Tell me not in mournful numbers," or with the metallic jingle of "In God We Trust."

How different the life of a country where feudalism was rampant, where Czarism was absolute, where censorship suppressed

even the mildest expression of political dissent; where the cold Steppes spread interminable — level and gray; where millions of gray peasants toiled hopelessly, in absolute darkness and illiteracy. Marching. Whither? One can only protest or one can brood: one can be either a Gorky or an Andreyev. Melancholy is natural. Life seems an abstraction. A sense of futility is inevitable. "In Russia," one of Chekhov's characters says, "a man of genius... lives cut off from the world by frost and storm and trackless muddy roads, surrounded by coarse people who are crushed by poverty and disease. His life is one endless struggle, with never a day's respite. How can a man live like that for forty years and stay sober and unspotted?" *) The Russian manner has been indigenous to Russian life. Russia today does not produce new Dostoievskys and Tolstoys. Russia has changed, and its literature has changed. When its political turmoil has settled down sufficiently to enable more decided literary crystallization, the final product will be as different from the literature of the '80's and the '90's as the literature of the age of Pope was different from the literature of the age of the Elizabethans, or as the literature of the age of Shelley and Byron and Keats was different from the literature of the age of Pope.

Russia has changed. And America has changed. America has been called a young country for so long a time that the meaning and characteristics of youth have been lost. The time of discoveries in the resources of America has had its end. The gold rushes and copper rushes and oil rushes — these have had to come to a halt. The great open West is open no longer. The frontier has disappeared and a generation is growing up which knows nothing of the frontier and its sturdy, democratic influence on the life of a nation. Nearly twenty years ago, after the great coal strike of anthracite miners, Theodore Roosevelt deplored our diminishing economic opportunities "for all." Even then he spoke of a golden age which had passed. "A few generations ago," he said, "the American workman could have saved money, gone West, and taken up a homestead... now the free lands were gone. In earlier days a man who began with a pick and shovel might come to own a mine..." Great strikes — coal, railroad and what not — have now become a daily occurrence, the inevitable expression and accompaniment of a fierce class struggle.

*) "Uncle Vanya"

The legend of "equal and unlimited opportunity" has had to burst. The growth of the American Federation of Labor, with a membership of over three million; the growth of the I. W. W. and numerous other organizations composed almost entirely of people who work for wages and have been working for wages a great many years, and in most cases were born of fathers who in their time already worked for wages, and failed to transmit a fortune of the Astors or the Goulds or the Vanderbilts; the growth of the Socialist Party, of a Workers' Party, of a Farmer-Labor Party — the growth of all these forces indicates to what extent the realization of the flimsiness of the legend has penetrated the masses. In 1920 "nearly one-fifth of the people of the United States were in some positive way dependent upon the operations of trade unions."*) Class consciousness, akin to that prevalent in old Europe has arrived. "Men begin to be in that state of life to which it has pleased God to call them," says Stephen Graham; and, what is more, they know it.

Politics have become stable and have settled down to a process of pettiness, corruption and graft, which even the buoyant, easy-going, optimistic American, secure in a wordy idealism of an earlier and nobler day, has come to hold more or less in contempt. The growth of the giant political parties, with their delegates and machines, their Crokers and Murphys and Barnses and Lorimers and Platts and Penroses, has undoubtedly contributed materially to this realization. Keen observers of the Old World saw this collapse of our political ideals much earlier. Lord Bryce in 1888 drew an unforgettable picture of our political corruption in his *American Commonwealth*. Our political life, at least our view of it, has undergone a complete change. If there be a so-called Younger Generation, it is certain that the old tenets of our government do not mean to them what it meant to their fathers. From the Highest Law down to the latest amendment, everything is viewed with a rather skeptical, often cynical smile. Everything is undergoing a revaluation. "Certainly we of the Younger Generation have some time since ceased to regard the Constitution as the Boon of Mankind, wafted from the invigorating ether by an Almighty desirous of registering His delight at the honest perspicacity of our progenitors."**)

*) History of the United States — Chas. A. Beard. Page 574.

**) Ellis O. Briggs, The Younger Generation. McNaught's Magazine, Jan., 1924.

In brief, young America has become middle aged — at least in body; for it is with the body that it has heretofore been concerned. Children are not accustomed to breaking their hearts over the welfare of their souls. It is only when age comes and the horizon becomes limited that the problem of the soul comes to the fore. The unlimited American horizon has narrowed down considerably. The West has become west, and is very near the East. The romance of pioneering has evaporated, and with it, to a large extent, the romance of industrial pioneering as well. "Success" as a slogan and gospel of life has become flat and brittle. O'Neill's drama "Beyond the Horizon" has more than local scope. The whole country is dotted with farms and factories, and each little section is hemmed in by an unyielding horizon; for beyond is again a little valley, presenting very much the same unromantic scene. Bret Harte today would be an anomaly. To recruit a romantic coloring similar to Harte's, Jack London had to go all the way to Alaska, Frederick O'Brien sails the South Seas, and Wilbur Daniel Steele — a fine artist with words — sails everywhere.

Other groups of Americans whom the narrowness and sterility of American life fails to absorb escape to Europe or into themselves — wandering chaotically in search of order in a disordered world. Ezra Pound, T. S. Eliot, and "H. D.," seek classicism in an unclassical, decaying Old World. Other American artists group themselves around exotic publications with revolutionary or romantic names: "Broom"; "Secession"; "Gargoyles"; "Palms"; "The Fugitive"; "Voices"; "Pegasus"; "Clay" — in Italy, in Austria, in France, in Mexico, in Tennessee, in New England, in California, in New York. Still others seek escape for their brooding souls in cheap cabarets, in fashion and beauty reviews, in attacks on prohibition, in swaggering cynicism, in pornographic "art", in parodies, in batiks, in importing fragile old rhythms, in "lapis lazuli" and "chrysoprase".

We are beginning to brood: melancholy is a natural reaction to middle age. Distance and its attendant opportunities have disappeared. Men feel the ties of local soil or asphalt. Life has settled down to a solidity of scene which cannot be shifted at will. Yearning is natural. The Day of the Yearning Complex has arrived, not due to Freud in Austria, but to life in America. The day of seeking for spiritual values has arrived — not due to Dostoevsky in Russia, but to life in America.

Sherwood Anderson is a product of middle-aged America. His body is middle-aged. His soul is the soul of an adolescent. He sings,

"I am mature, a man child in America, in the West, in the great valley of the Mississippi . . ."

"I am a child, a confused child in a confused world . . ." *)

In the course of industrial development, of economic acquisition, the spiritual life of the country has been neglected, relegated to a secondary position. It has slumbered on — safe in traditions, in shibboleths, in its own righteousness, its own destiny. The body has been fed. It has attained a certain degree of satiety; and a certain amount of disintegration has set in. The spirit rises, with numerous queries and demands. It is young, somewhat stunted, self-conscious, confused, at moments loud, and again, over-timid; at moments virile, and again, shrinking. It is a bit grotesque. But it is interesting, alive. It keeps our middle-aged self, like the old writer in Anderson's preface to "Winesburg," from becoming grotesque. For "it was the young thing inside him that saved the old man"; and it is the young, rebellious spirit inside that saves us.

Thirty years ago William Dean Howells discovered the gray Russians, and liked them. He wrote about them. He glowingly defended their art, their philosophy, their genius; but he did not become a Russian. He remained an Ohioan and a New Englander. His realism was the realism of America thirty years ago. He does not sound Russian. Anderson does. It were easy for him to sound Russian, Freudian or what not, even if he did admire these European writers. And not only for Anderson, but for an increasing numbers of our younger realists and romanticists. All they have to do is to be themselves — children of a country with a middle-aged body and an adolescent soul.

Anderson *is* himself. He is the most subjective of our writers. He is the most natural expression of a nation grown stable and become conscious of it. Sometimes he cries out in protest against this stability; sometimes he bursts forth in lyrical longing for the day that was — for our Golden Age; sometimes the optimistic youth in him flaunts a hope that another day is coming; and often he impotently broods with regret at the waste of human life.

*) Mid-American Chants.

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Through Anderson speaks the economical and psychic life of a nation suddenly awakened to the fact that it has attained physical maturity, but that it has not attained spiritual maturity.

The fact that Anderson baffles most of his contemporaries and public does not change his significance. He is a phenomenon none the less. It is but natural that his views, his words, his pictures, his emotion, should be rejected here and there. He is one of the first voices expressing, announcing and exhorting a change; and a first voice is always strange — always a bit peculiar, even uncanny. It does not sound just right; and sometimes it isn't. It doesn't always strike the right timber and pitch. Sometimes it cuts off with an uncouth incision. Sometimes it wavers off into nothingness.

VIENNA LETTER

Vienna, March 1925.

Franz Werfel is one of the most dazzling figures of the younger generation in German poetry. Not a few critics would unhesitatingly go further and declare: the greatest of the younger German poets and one in the most direct lineage of high achievement. Personally he is the most spontaneous and unaffected of men, and he laughed goodnaturely at my repeated efforts to interview him. One day I made up my mind to delay no longer and to seize the very next occasion. As I sat waiting for him in his Vienna apartment where he spends a part of every winter (he does most of his writing in an isolated country house in the Semmering) I framed a number of tentative questions which I intended putting to him. My preconceived skeleton, however, at once collapsed as he swept into the room in his brisk, lively fashion and shouted genially: "Gruess Gott! How is Vienna treating you?"

Werfel is a short, stocky man, with a vivid round face topped with long black hair which he incessantly combs with his hands, especially when he is heated by controversial or even just ordinary conversation. Despite his stockiness, he is extraordinary nimble on his feet; his talk is always lively, highly-colored and penetrated through and through with a warm *bonhomie*. Although only thirty-two years old, he has already won the praise of two extremely discriminating publics, that of Germany and Austria; according to reports, he is no less highly esteemed in anti-German Prague, the city of his birth.

Before the war he lived in Prague, leaving it to serve in the Austrian army. As a result of his harrowing experiences — experiences of the sensitive mind and nerves rather than of the actual conflict — he wrote his gripping story *Cabrinowitsch*, which appeared last year in *Die Neue Rundschau*. His first book of poems *Der Welt Freund* (The World-Friend) written when Werfel was under twenty-one, made him famous all over Germany and Austria. This was followed by other collections of poems, including *Wir Sind* (We Are) and *Einander* (One Another). These three early volumes betray what a deep influence English poetry exercised on

the young Werfel; one noted the pervasive spirit of Whitman above all, and, next to Whitman, the imprint of Byron and Shelley. He has also written many plays, poetic plays nearly all of which have found their way to the stage. Among these are — to single out only the better known ones — *Der Besuch von Elysium* (The Visit from Elysium), *Die Troierinner*, (The Trojan Women) a free adaptation of the tragedy of Euripides, modernized perhaps, but only in its general import so that Euripides is made to appear contemporary in spirit with our own times, particularly with the Great War; *Bockesgesang* (Goat Song) has been announced for spring production by the Theatre Guild, and *Spiegelmensch* (Mirror Man) has already been much discussed in American newspapers and reviews.

The most far-reaching of all of Werfel's plays is, beyond doubt, *Spiegelmensch*, a Faust-drama written in rhymed verse, depicting the duel within every man between the unwordly and the worldly self. In his plays, as in his poetry, Werfel shows himself to be a robust unwarped vitalist, a yea-sayer to life, in this respect unique in his generation; like Whitman he is one who would enclose the whole sentient world within his own breast.

This phenomenal poet has also written two novels; one bears the paradoxical title of "Not the Murder but the Murdered is Guilty," and the other — not yet published but the proofs of which I have seen — is entitled *Verdi*, a novel dealing with musical life and theory. As may be guessed, Werfel is a profound musical enthusiast, and the clash between two great musical ideas as limned in this latest book is sure to be recognized as masterly. His newest book of poems, *Beschwoerungen* (Incantations), moreover, had only appeared a few weeks earlier. Fourteen volumes of poetry, plays and narrative prose — and their creator but thirty-two!

Herr Werfel, after offering me a comfortable chair and a long blackish cigar, observed:

"I've just finished reading "Emperor Jones" which is now appearing in *Die Neue Rundschau*. You know, I have a great admiration for your dramatist, Eugene O'Neill. He interests me very much. It strikes me that he is not only a dramatist of the first water, but an amazing poet as well, although the dramatic elements in "Emperor Jones" are not at all unusual. The dramatic action in this play, to be frank, did not move me as much as the visions of Brutus Jones. The fearsome phantasmagoria of the negro are

simply splendid; they touched me deeply, but I missed the dramatic action where I most looked for it: in the conflict between the half-civilized Jones and his black uncivilized brothers on the lonely island. O'Neill seems to have evaded for some reason showing us *that*, save by implication. It may be that my own ideas of drama are a little different from those held by Mr. O'Neill and in this, I suspect, I am at odds with a good many of my fellow dramatists. In "From Morn to Midnight" by Georg Kaiser, for example, I seem to detect the same fault. Drama to me means conflict, exteriorization. But then, I'm willing to grant, that both Georg Kaiser and Eugene O'Neill have probably had more experience in the theatre than I have."

I met this objection of Werfel's by saying that for myself spiritual conflict, when vividly presented, as it undoubtedly is in both these plays, can be highly dramatic. Werfel then replied: "But that makes the drama wholly intellectual, don't you think?"

"True enough," I said, "but it's drama just the same." At this point I asked Werfel how he came to evolve the idea of *Spiegel-mensch*, the conception of the *doppelganger* as dramatic material.

"It's an old concept, of course," he answered. "I only modernized it by defining the two selves in man, the positive and the negative, the pragmatic and acquisitive on one side, and the ideal and non-acquisitive on the other. The germinal idea came to me in the following manner: one night on returning home from the theatre, I chanced to see myself in a mirror and a feeling of immense horror suddenly overcame me—horror toward my outward self, the self that had precipitated me into a world of petty affairs, which seemed unworthy of tumultuous high thoughts pressing for expression inside myself, in one word, of the second and better self. I seized the nearest object at hand and smashed the offending image. Thence arose the idea for a sort of variety sketch, if you like, and in this state it remained for quite a long time. I had envisaged in myself an "I" and a "You", and I wished, if possible, to reconcile these elements or to destroy the baser self which I heartily loathed. This was the origin of the play which I later developed into a long and serious piece of work." Then Werfel brought out his printed notes for a *Dramaturgie*, only ten copies of which are extant, and I read his own *ex post facto* analysis of this fine poetic drama, surely one of the most searching and stimulating poems written in our time.

When I had finished perusing the *Dramaturgie*, by a transition

easy enough to comprehend, we veered to the subject of Expressionism.

"Expressionism!" exclaimed Werfel. "What does it mean? I confess I don't know. Yes; I mean it seriously. After I had published two books of poems, in 1911, several German critics started to label me an Expressionist. Even now I can't quite say that I understand the term. I recognize, to be sure, that it is a general sobriquet for a period and a group of poets and dramatists creating in that period, but beyond this common knowledge I am baffled by the word. Really, I don't give a hang for labels and definitions."

After I had mentioned that I perceived the influence of Whitman in his early work, Werfel promptly returned:

"You are quite right. Whitman is perhaps the man to whom I owe most. When I was younger I used to sit up nights reading him. To me at that time, as now, he seemed to be the one creative spirit who had ushered in a new era in poetry. He was not, to my mind, exclusively American, as many Europeans regard him. To me he was sweepingly universal. Ernst Lissauer once remarked in some paper that I 'created in space'. He probably meant that I created in a pantheistic and panhuman world in which Whitman's spirit dwelt. Some people call it 'cosmos'. But here again the tag doesn't matter. Shelley, too, had a most profound influence on me and I undertook to translate several of his poems, including "*Ode to a Skylark*." Werfel then softly quoted the first two lines of his version:

*"Heil dir Lied-Geist,
Vogel warst du nie!"*

"You are, mentally accusing me of other early enthusiasms aren't you?" he asked with a fine smile. "Well, why not admit it? There was Poe, for instance, who was the most magical poet who ever lived; and Byron, whose soul-torment we Europeans find it so easy to sympathize with and share."

We touched on other subjects of a kindred nature, and before I took my leave the poet gave me an exhibition in lifelike pantomime of the mannered performance of a famous young pianist-composer whom he had seen the night before. His face lit up vividly, then became slightly contorted; he moved his hands wildly over an invisible keyboard, striking out unheard arpeggios and glissandos. I leaned back in my chair and laughed.

As I rose to go, the poet seized the gigantic sexagonal pencil

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it was almost two feet long—lying on his desk, and waved it threateningly under my nose.

"The next time we meet," he laughed, "we must talk more about the United States, a country that I'd like to visit incognito. Then we can talk about prohibition, book-censorship and the theatre above all, the theatre, which I hear is very interesting there just now. *Auf Wiedersehen!*"

PIERRE LOVING

BOOK REVIEWS

THE LAND OF THE CHILDREN

"LEONID ANDREYEV" *By Alexander Kaun. New York. B. W. Huebsch. \$3.50.*

The problem that has torn the heart of every sentient thing that has dared face its terrors, is: Why am I here? What is the secret behind creation? Is there a secret, or a gaping void? Omniscience alone, in the various kinds of god conceived in compensation of man's ignorance, trembles not before that awful gulf, but sits impassive; for omniscience and all-feeling are one with their opposites, omnigrance and utter apathy. That is why the first gods were idols; perfection demands the immobility of death.

But all lesser beings pass their days, in the measure of their intelligence and sensitivity, a quest for the infinite answer to the riddle of the sphinx that is life. It is recorded that Lucifer fell in his pride, having dared pretend to the attributes of God, to the sum of this understanding — so that Satan must ever seek the knowledge Lucifer, undeserving, strove to glean. Unable in his own person and through his own devices to win the secret that gives mastery over life and death, Satan led mankind to the tree of knowledge of good and evil. Throughout the centuries man has traversed the avenues of life, and ever perched above his shoulders Satan—mind—stealthily observant has waited, always anguished to read the answer that never is vouchsafed. History is the record of man's blundering quest.

In "Anathema," Andreyev has bodied forth, in religious garb, this ever-recurring story, that is at the heart of the world. The mind of man sends his unwilling body out; armies, the wealth of lands that are prize of his conquest, he gathers at its bidding, cunning or force to unleash in the chase. Ever the prey eludes him. Life is a hunting through a strange forest for unknown game.

Possession? or pride? or power? or happiness? None can be held, for in the question each escapes us. Knowledge? 'Tis but consciousness—denied—of what we would attain. Power? The giant thrashing through the dark. Possession, a weight on hands that can-

not measure. Pride, blindness. Happiness, the emotion that comes with the pot at the rainbow's end. Life is a delusion we yield to open-eyed.

* * *

Dr. Kaun, in this study wherein sympathy and scholarship fuse to a faithful portrait, shows how deeply Andreyev was moved at the horror of life. To this sense of overwhelming oppression the man responded in various moods, for his writings are a mirror of his life. At times he despaired of any change, though any change must be improvement. Again, he struggled desperately against incalculable odds, defiant as hell itself in pitchy hate of the smugly righteous. From 1914 to his death five years later, he threw himself vehemently into the struggle for human freedom; all his work of this period is propaganda. At moments, too, in spells of despondency, more material thoughts impelled his energy; and Andreyev wrote a pot-boiler, or tried to bring forth a best seller, or to edit a popular magazine. Always his life spoke forthright in his writings.

In general, although Andreyev's attitude is seldom precise, wavering with his circumstances, there underlies his outlook a contempt for the men about him, for the herd. With effective contrast Dr. Kaun distinguishes the trend toward Schopenhauer rather than toward Nietzsche that rises from this scorn. Instead of breaking personally forward to a doctrine designed for the few, the supermen, Andreyev finds room, despite his contempt for men, to pity mankind, and to hope for the general melioration. Yet here he rebounds to the Nietzschean idea, for Schopenhauer's ideal man achieves pity through negation and resignation; Andreyev wins from despair to a hope in the future, "in a synthetic man relegated to the land of the children." Yet this promise is put off to a distant time; the present is to Andreyev always dark, unpropitious, without a glimmer round the whole horizon: "He died with hatred for the Bolsheviki, with chagrin at the besotted Whites, with indignation against the Allies, with contempt and scorn for all mankind."

The curious vacillation between the ideas of Nietzsche and those of Schopenhauer that is evident in Andreyev's work springs from the fact that he is at heart with neither. To him truth lay in the co-ordinating of opposite views, in a synthesis by which the two extremes blend in a harmonizing mean. His favorite among his paintings was that in which he pictures Judas and Jesus on a single

cross, one crown of thorns about their brows. He dreamed of "a synthesis of gentle Jesus, with his love condoning human frailties and follies, and of the ruthless *advocatus diaboli* of the one never-closing, ever-accusing eye; a harmonious union of Aye and Nay, of spontaneous acceptance of life, creative and constructive, and of alert analysis, dissecting and destructive." Thus, in his writings, we find no ideal man, only a suggested synthesis, with hope "in the land of the children."

Dr. Kaun's study presents a mass of biographical and bibliographical details that makes it a proud example of scholarship. His introduction, indicating the almost completely propagandist nature of Russian literature, states that there was needed—and came in Andreyev—"a voice which would not be drowned in popular outbursts and blinding passions, but would ring clearly and constantly a note of interrogation, a why and a wherefore as to life and its values, as to man, his destinies and beliefs and quests." To demonstrate this position of Andreyev "above the battle"—although the attitude is indeed seldom long maintained—is the purpose that makes the study largely expository. The one sustained passage of critical consideration is with good judgment based on a letter from Tolstoi to Andreyev, in which the older writer cautions the youth in four particulars:

(1) "One should write only when the thought he wants to express is so insistent that it will not leave him in peace until he has given it as good body as he can." In this respect Andreyev's life gives evidence of his earnestness.

(2) "There is often the desire to be peculiar, original, to astonish and surprise the reader. This excludes simplicity, and simplicity is the necessary condition of the beautiful." There is no doubt that Andreyev frequently lacks simplicity; this rises not, however, from a desire to "épater le bourgeois," but from the subjective nature of Andreyev's writings and the complex and often undecided character of his ideas.

(3) "hurried writing. This is both harmful and a sign that the writer has no genuine need for expressing his thought." Although Andreyev regarded all styles as his servants, to be utilized according to the theme, the intensity of his feeling and his inability to detach himself from the events at hand led him frequently to hasty composition, as it drew him often to propaganda.

(4) "the desire to respond to the tastes and demands of the major part of the contemporary reading public." This, which is the reverse of the second fault, was equally foreign to Andreyev, who usually had little concern for public opinion, and wrote from a burning emotion that flamed on his page.

From this fervor for expression, this immediate response to life in personal and deep reaction, rose his many petty weaknesses and his one great strength. Frequently overcome by the character he wrote and lived—too tearful, for example, to record the embrace between parents and doomed son in "The Seven Who Were Hanged"—"writing with the blood of his heart," Andreyev gains a power of conviction and a poignancy that lends to his realistic works a meaning beyond the limits of immediacy, and to his symbolic writings the pulse of inner truth. Dr. Kaun reveals him richly, a suffering man and a sensitive artist.

JOSEPH T. SHIPLEY.

FROM ZOLA TO ARAGON

HISTORY OF CONTEMPORARY FRENCH LITERATURE

By René Lalou. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. \$5.00.

A book which had been written for the special purpose of furnishing "to the young and to foreigners a guide to that labyrinth of contemporary literature whose threshold is the stopping place for all histories published up to the present" would be sure of a welcome from the hardy perennial group of thirsters after knowledge in assimilated form. A book which had been written with a view to assisting the reading public in its orderly effort "to attach writers and their works to various movements of thought" would be gathered in with gratitude by an additional circle of readers whose learning lacks only systematization. A book, finally, which had been written in order that readers might find in it "an occasion for confirming their preferences on being presented with a complete picture in which their favorite authors are discussed and appreciated" purely as creators would surely appeal to what is left of the literate world. The triumph of M. René Lalou ought therefore to be complete, since those are the three ends pursued by him throughout the pages of his history of French literature from 1870 "to our days," pub-

lished now in an English translation by Mr. William Aspenwall Bradley from the text as blue-penciled by Mr. Ernest Boyd.

An American reviewer of this book ought first of all to realize that he falls in the class of "the young and foreigners" whose hands M. Lalou reaches for, in his role of guide through regions uncharted. If he accepts his status as an American (not a synonym for "youth" or for "alien") and as a reviewer, he will take immediate advantage of his classification by dodging any reckoning with M. Lalou's second and third purposes in writing this history. The only way to express an opinion on the relation of French writers to movements of thought or on the value of matching preferences against discussions would be to write another history of French literature: but this an American reviewer can not do, being young, alien and a reviewer.

What he will find himself able to do will be to give testimony to the clarity and orderliness of M. Lalou's book—order being here, as elsewhere, the cause of clearness. For in a study of histories of literature, of politics, even of such things as movements of thought, not familiarity with the facts so much as a certain quasi-aesthetic reaction to a formalized grouping of the facts is the scholar's fruit, if only the unity of that study is not punctuated by too many temporal interruptions.

It seems then that the object of the literary historian should be what M. Lalou's has been: to find the speediest vehicle of conveyance over his allotted space in order that the disastrous factor of fluctuating attention may not enter into the count. M. Lalou's difficulties begin when he has exhausted the stable compiled by Gourmont, which included only "la tapissière parnassienne, le tombereau naturaliste, le cab psychologique, le vélodrome néochrétien." Says M. Lalou, "I have limited myself to adding a chair car large enough to contain all the adversaries of naturalism, and after that I have sailed with Sindbad toward the open symbolistic sea." The concluding chapters on strictly contemporary litterateurs—(for the sake, merely, of example) Gide, Larbaud, Morand, Cocteau . . . make such rapid reading that one might imagine they were written *en locomotive* if that vehicle did not point back so definitely to 1912 and Marinetti manifestos.

This volume makes the usual claims to judicial impartiality and critical impersonality—the election of M. Henri Bordeaux to

the Academy chair left vacant by Lemaître having shown so positively just where the case of critical impressionism now stands. It may be that complete impartiality is impossible: certainly it is difficult to feel that M. Lalou's effort to write only "what seemed to him the truth" has been wholly successful in effacing his personality from the liveliest pages of his manual. But I can see no ground for an assertion that has been made in connection with this book, that its author is prejudiced in favor of a particular literary group; for if inclusiveness is any indication of impartiality there was never a less biased historian than M. Lalou, who is not at all partial to hexameters or octosyllables in preference to vers libres or to 24-m lines in preference to any of the foregoing. He accordingly fails to mention nobody nor any book to whom or to which children and foreigners would need to be guided, and the nearest approach to a slight is the manner in which he dismisses, for example, Pierre Benoit by saying in a few words that he is unable to "construct a good feuilleton," or Bordeaux by calling him the most boring of the provincialists.

The approach to writers who enjoy M. Lalou's respect is mainly through summary and quotation. In writing on such standard essay subjects as Mallarmé, Rimbaud, Laforgue, he often makes side remarks that are acute where those of other essayists are merely chatty; but the greater part of his space is taken up by summaries of his authors' works, analysis apparently not having a very important place in M. Lalou's theory of criticism. If the opening sentences of his chapter on "*la critique*" are his final words on this tiresomely insoluble problem, even an American reviewer need not feel badly about the final two-thirds of M. Lalou's trifold object in writing this history: "Poetry, the drama, the novel, the essay show the literary life in its creative aspect. There exists another in which language is limited to the clear expression of ideas."

As for his down-to-the-minute observations on the latest "movements" of both wings of the literary carinata, the lack of anything nearly so complete and orderly as his own work to match them against makes it allowable to stop with applause for their timely appearance: to add that they are perhaps not altogether final would be to commit once more than is necessary the discourtesy of objecting to M. Lalou's belief in the existence of at least one absolute, to which he has been pleased to give the name "*l'impartialité littéraire*."

HANSELL BAUGH.

A POSTIL TO D. H. LAWRENCE

THE RAINBOW By D. H. Lawrence. New York. Thomas Seltzer. \$2.50.

Modern art is not self-expression, but self-search. It does not assert, it questions, seeks, endeavors to correlate the individual to a chaotic universe. It has left the field of *mores* and has gradually gravitated towards the field of the Ego—baffled by a plexus of tendencies and forces which it can neither control nor understand. The inner chaos of modern literature has no other meaning than this: it is the result of a world lost in a torrent of forces no one of which can impose itself as a guiding principle. Dante could *ex-press*: he could press out of his mind intelligibly the crystallized sediment of his experience, because he saw that experience in reference to a principle that served him as a guiding light, as a sign; because he saw it in reference to an idea which he accepted wholly, and which served him as a hoop to bind it with, and a standard with which to measure it. Cervantes could criticize for the same reason. Even as late as Goethe, who stands at the tail end of a cycle, one could be an affirmative artist. Today that is denied us. We, if truly modern, and not merely sentimental reactionaries looking at life through the prism of an antiquated philosophy, are chaotic in the metaphysical implications of our work. We grope because we accept no guiding principle, no religious idea—in the etymological meaning—under the light of which we can direct our efforts to some end with a meaning beyond our own individual selves. We negate. Our art, therefore, must also be negative. It offers no definite moral or intellectual attitude born from the womb of common human needs. It is not only individualistic and heterodox, but anarchic. It has no meaning, therefore, beyond ourselves, other than it may have as an historic document.

Here, it seems to me, we have a *point d'appui* from which we can build a necessary explanation of the meaning of *modern*. But we must note, if irrelevantly, the truism that not all contemporary artists are modern. They are modern who have thrown overboard the faith of yesterday with all its subtle implications, who have no spiritual rudder or compass, who search in the welter of contem-

porary tendencies for a guiding light, which cannot be found because it has not defined itself and probably never will. Men like Galsworthy, for instance, or Hardy, belong to yesterday: they are living anachronisms.

D. H. Lawrence is pre-eminently modern, in this sense. In Lawrence must be noted a gradual, organic growth towards modernism—towards spiritual disintegration. His earlier novels obey the law of yesterday, though they have in them the ungerminated seeds of today. Those which follow—and *The Rainbow* is among these—mark a period of transition. The inertia of his dead faith is strong enough yet to predominate, though he has begun to shed it unconsciously. He is not yet free, in that anarchic sense which in his *Studies of Classic American Literature* he denies. With *Women in Love* the foetal spirit of today first finds definite expression, and the novels which follow are simply a growing manifestation of this tendency; an increasing acceptance of the law he must obey. His last novel, *The Boy in the Bush*, is so modern—so chaotic in its tendencies, so obviously a question posited and left unsolved—that it has merited a deluge of hisses from the honorable critical faculty among us.

We will note a superficial but significant manifestation of this growth toward modernism in Lawrence—of this disintegrating tendency—if we observe the development of his style. In *Sons and Lovers* he knows how to write beautifully, lyrically, seeming at times as preoccupied with style as Pater. He is able to express the beauty of nature in some of its forms in a prose richly incrustated with the iridescence of words carefully selected, arranged with the rhythm of a master musician of words. In *The Rainbow* only a few passages remind one of the former stylist. Here the hectic beat of a baffled man, of a man no longer certain of his bearings, predominates. In *Women in Love*, it runs throughout. While in *The Boy in the Bush*, Lawrence has entirely ceased to be the stylist to whom, in the words of Newman, "the tuneful diction, that felicitousness in the choice and exquisiteness in the collocation of words . . . is nothing but the mere habit and way of a lofty intellect." Were his merits to rest on his later prose alone, he would be relegated to a secondary place in modern English literature.

This deterioration in style is the ineluctable result of a spiritual disintegration which I have not before seen noted. A disintegration

similar to that of Joyce, though in the Irishman the essentially subjective quality of his art renders difficult the observation of his subservience to a time-trend. Here lies the crux of my point: we will note in Lawrence, beyond his later hectic prose and his chaotic mind, as a cause of these, an animosity for the springs of his spiritual life. He has broken his nexus with the past. But devoid of any sort of guiding principle or dogma, he has been forced to start a long and weary peregrination in search of some primitive and radical manifestation of life, with which he seeks to identify himself as a prerequisite to some inner self-fulfillment. He is a man baffled by life, in search of an attitude—in search of himself. His owlsh, dark-loving soul seeks to pierce beyond the mendacious reality of the senses, in search of the truth he suspects hidden beyond the core of things. But he fails, of course, because modern that he is, he is enmeshed in a plexus of contradictory tendencies, of antithetical negative aspirations, in favor of any one of which he cannot decide himself, for he does not obey, to use his own words, “any deep, inward voice,” he does not obey “from within.”

ELISEO VIVAS.

EPILOGUE

STRAWS AND PRAYERBOOKS, *Dizain des Diversions*, by James Cabell, Robert M. McBride & Company, New York.

Here, in what is affirmed to be a valedictory, Cabell escapes Felix Kennaston's pudgy-pasty body, masquerades no longer as Manuel the Swineherd, is discommoded neither by Jurgen's shadow nor by Jurgen's chivalrous staff, and is content to make his bow and hold the stage in the name of Cabell.

Yet I find this Cabell no stranger, having met with him frequently, albeit variously named and described, throughout all the preceding Biography. The present epilogue is no less a fiction than those tales of Kennaston's adventures with the sigil, or Jurgen's generous response to feminine need. Let no one be deceived by the autobiographic device of “Straws and Prayer-Books.” The Cabell it offers is a Cabell of romance, not the authentic fellow of flesh and bone who feeds thrice daily and perhaps, now that he ages slightly, takes a pill at bedtime.

This romantic Cabell of the immediate volume is declared as a *litterateur* of a whimsical aloofness. He writes, it is stated, solely to divert himself. Indeed, fully half of his book argues that no literary artist writes for any other reason. The other half occupies itself with disparaging such feeble literary workmen as George Moore, Francois Rabelais, Miguel de Cervantes, W. H. Hudson, and Walt Whitman—with an encomiastic chapter upon the novels of Joseph Hergesheimer.

But I reveal the content of "Straws and Prayer-Books" unfairly. That is to say, I invite an unfair misapprehension. It is necessary at once to voice a warning. It would be quite ungenerous to accuse Cabell of blundering, not to say doltish criticism—and I warn against any such judgment. Cabell does not essay to speak *ex cathedra*. He wears no punditic robes. His list of the world's ten least competent writers, a part of which I have just cited, serves as a charming segment in the romantic mosaic of "Straws and Prayer-Books." It is a device employed as an aid in the evocation of this new fictional character—the Cabell of the epilogue.

I say that the Cabell of "Straws and Prayer-Books" is a fictional character. It is expedient, however, to submit certain qualifications. The book offers, after all, intimations of a more realistic Cabell. For instance, there is the Cabell whose aloofness as a literary craftsman writing solely to divert himself is tinged with a somewhat earthy interest in the response of his audience. This realistic Cabell is irked at time by the idiocies of reviewers and he employs a clipping bureau to inform him of their antics. In short, there is the whimsical, self-sufficing Cabell of the romantic evocation—and there is another figure in the background, a trifle more humanly familiar.

It pleases me that this creature more familiarly human was kept in the shadows. I am delighted with the romantic Cabell. He is vastly appealing, appealing as a friend whose realistic shortcomings are glossed by the concealing illusions of friendship. "Straws and Prayerbooks" is the sort of work every robustly egotistic author longs, at one time or another, to write. In yielding to this egotistic urge an author escapes from his common, dowdy self, from the none too remarkable fellow perceived by the neighbors, and autobiographically presents himself as the gypsy character he would like to be.

L. M. HUSSEY.

REVIEWS IN BRIEF

LIVES AND TIMES, by *Meade Minnigerode*, New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, \$4.00.

— Avoiding the indulgently nostalgic, the informal biographer is superciliously indulgent. Informality is an excuse for being uncritical and readable — by those who want the “quaint”, that they may be at once wistful and lightly contemptuous.

THE SHEPHERD'S WEEK, by *John Gay*, New York: D. Appleton and Co. —

Mr. J. Gay in 1714 published this “amusing skit on the pastoral eclogue.” It is now (1924) presented to the sophisticated modern in facsimile. And rightly. Gay was a parodist of first-order, never extravagant, always poised — with a most delicate sense of the nonsensical. He converts Theocritus into comedy, by diverting the pattern of the Greek pastoral into the sluice of the genuine rustic manner.

THE THREE DERVISHES AND OTHER PERSIAN TALES, by *Reuben Levy*, New

York: Oxford University Press, \$.60. — Mr. Levy disarms criticism of the tales in his introduction: “Few of them have that skilful tying, and subsequent unravelling, of a ‘knot’, which characterizes a good novel. They are rather romances, in which the hero, after passing through many dangers by the way, at last reaches his goal . . . when love or treasure is the motive, it is not to the Persian narrator's purpose to be in the least degree edifying.” The translation is flexible and straightforward in its reproduced simplicity and its avoidance of borrowed subterfuge. It is a scholar's translation for laymen, but the scholar respects his reader's taste and the laymen need never squirm beneath the writer's erudition.

THE BEST POEMS OF 1924, edited by *L. A. G. Strong*, Boston: Small, Maynard

and Co., \$2.00. — Were one to take anthologies seriously, one might easily be distempered. But one should read anthologies with amused suspicion and then one may discover something of merit in them. In the present volume, if the reader were to read one poem and skip over two, he might find the title somewhat justified: the anthology does certainly contain “some of the best poems of 1924, and very many not the best. Or, if they *are* the best, it were better to leave the anthology business to Mr. Draithwate who likes almost everything. However, Mr. Strong is to be congratulated on many of his choices, which prove him a wiser judge than Louis Untermeyer or Jessie Rittenhouse. But one hopes a number of his choices were made in sport. Still, the thought persists that Mr. Strong often mistakes neatness for thoroughness. “One should read anthologies with amused suspicion.”

JONAH, by *Robert Nathan*, New York: Robert McBride Co., \$2.00 — Mr.

Nathan's Jonah, although not an important novel, is written with sufficient irony, wit and keen commentary on biblical characters to make it diverting.

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ORPHAN ISLAND, by *Rose Macaulay*. New York: Boni and Liveright. \$2.00.

— Miss Macaulay has done it again. Just as in "Told by an Idiot," she stated her theme in the first chapter and went on to repeat it until the finis; so in "Orphan Island," she begins by sarcastically upbraiding Victorian England and ends on the same note. Miss Macaulay sees the faults of twentieth century civilization as well as the prejudices of 1880; she knows the idiosyncracies of men and women; but she sets down her thesis in such a cynical manner that her story leaves one cold. Her characters are merely mouths for her ideas, and her ideas are merely reiteration of what she has said often before and what she writes too often again in her newest volume.

"SPRING THUNDER AND OTHER POEMS", by *Mark Van Doren*, New York:

Thomas Seltzer, \$1.50. — In the days when the author of *Don Juan* was calling Mr. Wordsworth a poet for unpoetical people, poets, not content to argue, would duel to champion their loves... natural or metaphysical poetry. Poets are still arguing, but not so intolerantly as those hotheads of a hundred years ago. For it seems obvious that mood and nature may suggest verse of significance, and that psychic vistas, — the curiously beautiful geography of the human mind, — may be at least equally inspiring. There has been, moreover, an increasing tendency, in the camps of both radicals and conservatives, to combine the two. Through the lines of the imagist, who is the modern equivalent of the nature poet, there is a constant and conscious suggestion of psychological parallels and dramatic symbolism. The intricate mind countries of Edwin Arlington Robinson know fields and stars that are at least the reflections of the fields and stars of our every day and night. The fantastic metaphysic of T. S. Eliot is as brilliant with the flash of sunlight as is the earth and gold of E. E. Cummings with illuminating thought, thoughts worthy almost of the professional psychoanalyst. It is therefore somewhat startling in this age when versifier and scientist can so easily meet and bow, to find a poet of the attributes of Mark Van Doren. It is true that Mr. Van Doren does not write a villanelle to a violet or a rondeau to a rose. But although his medium is free verse, and his subjects "To a Child with Eyes", or "Spring in the Pantry", he possesses a simplicity rarely presented in this generation by those who seek to have their verse seriously regarded. It is not the tense simplicity of the highly dramatic, not the restraint of austerity. It is the sort of simplicity with which Mr. Wordsworth went out to seek a poem in the daffodil... regarded the flower... and did not go home until the manuscript was in his sister's work basket. It is a simplicity which most of the world has outgrown, and poetry along with the world. Mr. Van Doren is, however, a tolerable craftsman, and in spite of this straightjacket naivete, occasionally writes verse as good as "Farm Barn Lot".

THE FIREBRAND, by *Edwin Justus Mayer*, New York: Boni and Liveright,

\$2.00. — Around an apocryphal episode in the life of Cellini, with deft complication and suave irony, Mr. Mayer swirls the spirit that flashes through the Autobiography. Something of the gallant gestures of Congreve lingers in the more robust Italian, who makes — not too reluctantly — sacrifice of love unto his art. At moments the moth of sentimentality hovers close — to die in the

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flame of mockery. Tenderness and sweet concern blend into laughter at love and fond lovers, at life's dear vanities, in almost Cabellian vein; indeed, Mr. Mayer's Florence might be a city of Poictesme. Skillfully developed, making bold, effective use of earlier devices — Falstaff's beasting about the robbers that beset him; "the night hath a thousand eyes;" etc. — "The Firebrand" twists an almost unwilling beauty out of its mockery, and repays for its surface dalliance and conscious device with an inner sincerity and charm.

THE FAR HARBOUR, *by Charles Norman*, New York: Blue Faun Press, \$1.00. — Youth immemorial is drawn to the sea. For in its great rhythm, its far lure to mysterious welcomings, and its summoning grandeur, the sea gathers in potent symbol the forces that are the very urge of living. It is the symbol made real; when a youth yearns to set forth on its waters, he is accepting the call and the challenge of life itself, in its most manifest, most majestic embodiment. It is this aspect of the sea that rises in "The Far Harbour", in sturdy, onrolling stanzas, well chosen and rhythmized to suggest the movement of the ocean. Many poets have been drawn by the power and beauty of the sea, that in its unending rhythm is not unlike their goal. From Homer to Masfield they have sought to imprison its cadences in their lines, to capture its serenity and its storm. Charles Norman, being young, is still wise in seeking to express only the hold of the sea on youth; this restriction wins for him a sincerity that envisages more of the sea and its sailors than is caught by pretentious bards.

CONTRIBUTORS CORNER

GEORGE GISSING—After more than thirty years, Gissing's critical study of the great Victorian novelist has been republished, a valuable thesis for the student of Dickens and a monument to George Gissing himself. With fine discriminating analysis, with critical veracity, and deep sincerity—the critic's tools—he molded and fashioned into a model of surpassing excellence his profound veneration for Charles Dickens. His words which so aptly described Dicken's work may be applied in a measure to his own little book: "Here is the secret of such work . . . it is done with delight—done (in a sense) easily, done with the mechanism of mind and body in splendid order." It was Gissing at his best.

Near the end of an arduous career, with dreams of success wakened into realities, Gissing began his critical appreciation of the master who had in countless ways influenced his own style and manner and social theories. Indeed, the book is a curious combination of Gissing and Dickens. Imbued with his spirit, Gissing for the first time as an author, achieved a spontaneous flow of delicate humor. His chapter devoted to the study of Dickens' satiric portraits, and more especially, his discussion of Dickens' female characters contain delightful passages which often threaten to overflow into merriment. But this is not Gissing; it is but the delicate apparition of Dickens' ghost appearing to him in the dark chamber of his thought and finding him in a friendly mood.

Gissing himself was primarily a scholar and a man of letters, and as such he saw, or rather studied, life and the actors on its stage. His zeal for scholarly exactitude and thoroughness of presentation produced a notable achievement, but hardly a beautiful piece of criticism. The book was planned meticulously to produce the effect of perfect unity and logical progression of thought. Its author exercised minute care in the selection of a vast amount of material he had at hand and he presented with ponderous elegance of style. It is very like a form carefully hewn from a great boulder; the features are clear and symmetrical from all points, but cold and hard to the touch.

By some strange misconception of the readers of Gissing's earlier

novels, *Workers in the Dawn*, *The Unclassed*, *Demos*, *Thyrza*, etc., Gissing has been often described with Dickens as "a writer of England's lower middle class." But not so. If poverty's stern necessity forced Gissing to live and move among England's grimy industrial workers, he did not have his being among them. For Gissing was a man apart, and he remained apart throughout his life. He did not begin his series of so-called social novels until after his return from Germany where he had steeped his mind in the systems of ancient and modern philosophies. The result was that in many instances Gissing sublimated his characters beyond recognition of their class. His social studies were the inevitable product of the scholar who attempts to understand society and to present it purely upon the basis of philosophical premises. Both Gissing and Dickens idealized the people of the working classes, but Dickens in a much more artistic and effective manner. He wrote of "servant lads and servant girls with their washerwoman and sempstress mothers"; he heard and recorded their boisterous laughter and their ranting passions, but the pitiful ugliness of themselves and their lives was mellowed and softened in the gentle glow of Dickens' benevolent humor. That was his divine gift; but Gissing was not so endowed.

He began his literary career with a firm conviction of his genius and with pretentious ambitions for it. In his first novel, he wrote:

"Let me get a little more experience, and I will write a novel such as no one has yet ventured to write, at all events in England. I begin to see my way to magnificent effects; ye gods, such light and shade! The fact is, the novel of every-day life is getting worn out. We must dig deeper, get into untouched social strata. Dickens felt this, but he had not the courage to face his subjects; his monthly numbers had to lie on the family tea-table. Not *virginibus puerisque* will be my book, I assure you, but for men and women who like to look beneath the surface, and who understand that only as artistic material has human life any significance. . . . Life as the source of splendid pictures, inexhaustible material for effects—that can reconcile me to existence, and that only."

Journalism as a means to his end, Gissing despised with scholarly repugnance. Before him had come Balzac with his *Comédie Humaine*, and Gissing, Mr. H. G. Wells declared, aspired to nothing

short of this. He aimed to do for the English lower middle class what Balzac had done for the French. Upon the foundation of Schopenhauer, Goethe, Haeckel, Comte, Shelley and German tomes on ancient philosophy—not a very sure foundation—Gissing would have built up this mighty and imposing structure.

“I had in me the making of a scholar. With leisure and tranquillity of mind, I should have amassed learning. Within the walls of a college I should have lived so happily, so harmlessly, my imagination ever busy with the old world. . . .”

Thus Gissing wrote in his last book to be published before his death. It is the cry of a man who is conscious of great potential power and of actual failure in its use. Though the novel, upon which he expended the better part of his talents, was hardly the appropriate expression for his genius, Gissing as an artist was not a failure. That he was not a greater artist was due to the fact that he was not really a great man. Gissing was a man of letters, not of life—a hermit forced to live midst a vast, seething, ugly humanity. What he complained of as unfriendly fate was his own temperamental lack of adjustment, and the cruel limitations upon his genius were those the supreme egoist imposes upon himself.

MARETTE QUICK

THE FUNERAL OF ANATOLE FRANCE — at the feet of Voltaire! Somewhere, on flawless page of lucid, musical and humane prose, Anatole France has poured out his heart in confessional, and acknowledged his debt not only to Renan and Montesquieu, but also to Voltaire, the great castigator, the supreme rationalist and libertarian. And appropriately, as if by design, the obsequies took place beside the pedestal of the statue of Voltaire in front of the *Institut de France*. It was right here, on the Quai Malaquais, that Anatole France spent his childhood, poring over the old books in his father's aristocratic shop, searching among the variegated collections that filled the stalls along the quay, drinking in the wisdom of the ancients and the suppleness and grace of the French classics — qualities which he was later to make his own.

It was Saturday afternoon, a gum-metal gray fall day, with rain threatening. All avenues leading to the Quai Malaquais,

narrow serpentine streets dotted with antique shops, bookstores and small art shops (in the window of one of which I spied the portrait of Claude Mackay, the radical American negro poet) were flooded with people. They were for the most part shabby, intense working men and women, who came to do homage to Anatole France, the friend of labor. M. Leon Jouhaux, secretary general of the C. G. T., spoke for all of them when he said in the course of his address: "The laboring masses, those who work every day that existence may be possible, are grateful to Anatole France for having reached down to their level, for having understood them, for having loved them. He praised the nobility of honest work and the working classes couple his name with that of Jaures."

The crowd surged almost up to the black and silver tribune, right up to the flower-heaped catafalque, swathed in violet gauze; violet gauze also dimmed the brightness of French flags; flambeaux smoked in the faintly chilly air. The river flowed sluggishly below; on the wharves the fishermen, oblivious of what was taking place on the quay, cast their lines and comatosely waited for a nibble. The soldiers lined up along the quay seemed but little more cognizant of what was going on; they carried their arms listlessly, glad of the command "At rest" when it came at last. The bookstalls in the vicinity of the *Institut* stayed open during the ceremonies — a fortuitous touch that would have delighted the master whose spirit was never at one with flags and soldiery and official formalities — and because of the immense eddying crowds did a thriving business. The poplar trees dropped yellow leaves indifferently on the catafalque.

The sky lightened; a thin wind lifted the violet streamers and curdled the smoke of the *pots-au-feu*. Somewhere a church clock struck two, and all at once the cleaved space around the Voltaire statue became alive with officers, policemen, and special delegations. Bicorne floated up on all sides — bicorne of beadles, bicorne of ushers, bicorne of coachmen and academicians, scurrying and ducking through the dense crowd. Workmen, still clad in their stained clothes, climbed out of mansard windows and clung perilously to narrow gutters of roofs or sat boldly astride the gabled windows. Around the tribune and catafalque appeared the dark portentous figures of French officialdom: M. Herriot, Doumergue, Hanotaux, Painleve, Blum, and Caillaux. M. Herriot greeting a small mourning figure suddenly became the focus of all the photographers,

clicking away for all they were worth, poised on ladders, on slim shelvings of stone, on nearby roofs: Madame France!

One heard the voice of the chairman, rendered croakingly metallic by the amplifier. The elaborate official ceremonies had commenced. Two hours of oratory, with the amplifier always harshening a little the liquid orotund flow of speech. Two hours passed before the tributes of the government, of the Academy, of the workers, of the Sorbonne, were over and the procession began its slow measured pace through the Champs Elysees toward Neuilly. Before the speeches were half done, however, praising the grace, the elegance, the clarity, irony and humanity of this dead prince of stylists, one found it hard to attend. One thought wanderingly of Crainquebille, of M. Bergeret, of Jerome Coignard and Pierre Noziere. Especially of little Pierre or, to speak truth, of Jacques Anatole, visiting his aunt, playing on the quays or (now the two identities have become wholly blurred) putting his nose into some rare old book in his father's shop. The crowd had quite vanished, and with it the guard of honor, the catafalque, the mourners, the violet streamers and the *pots-au-feu*. What remained behind, or started up out of the past, was an old bookseller with big glasses far down the gristle of his nose, wearing a round black cap — Thibault is his name — and a small lad whom he is encouraging to study and write. But the small boy needs no urging, really. The old man is saying: "Mon petit Anatole, when you write a book about a saint or something, since you read so much church lore nowadays, we shall print it right here in my shop. We will sign it with the name I sometimes use myself: France. A pretty name, is it not?"

PIERRE LOVING

HOME-MADE HEROES—Next after the American Indian, perhaps the most American thing in the world is the cowboy. Asia has her Arabian horsemen, Australia her mounted bush-rangers and South America her *gauchos*, but only in the short-grass country of Colorado, Wyoming, New Mexico and westward do you find that dare-devil combination of cavalier, roisterer, braggart, sentimentalist and life-lover who came into being with the great cattle ranches—and is disappearing with them, hemmed and hounded by fences, barbed wire barriers being the least of them. Around these men

grew more romance than a hundred old troubadours could recite, but because white-collared Pullman riders saw in the cow puncher only a hard-eyed two-gun man so has he been known to the world. "Western stuff" has come to be a stock phrase to denote sure-fire melodrama with as much gun play as a Civil War battle.

During the past five years, however, some truth has come from the cow country. Some of the boys went to war—most of them, in fact—and when they came back they realized how little the world knew of America's West. And these boys have tried to tell the truth about the cowboy and the cattle ranch and the West. Will James is one of these boys. And the fact that his book tells little more than the routine duties of a cowboy is eloquent of how little known is that truth. And of the art of Will James. A large percent of this latter is in his drawings, the best I've seen since Frederick Remington, though his prose reeks of sweat and saddle leather and alkali.

How much longer must American children be taught that romance all grew in Sixteenth Century England, around an outlaw robber who ate the King's venison and killed the King's sheriffs? That since the Revolutionary War the only important event in the United States' history was the sinking of the *Lusitania*? That America's West was settled by "uncouth fellows who ate from their fingers"? And that knighthood died with the crusades? When will the teachers of young America point to the shelves where we can find such books as *Cowboys North and South* and meet men who could have hog-tied and branded any three of Robin Hood's merry band without straining a little finger?

HAL BORLAND.

* *Cowboys North and South*, by Will James, New York. Charles Scribner's Sons, \$3.50.

ART NOTE — MAX WEBER

I remember seeing two years ago at the Anderson Galleries a huge Crucifixion by George Bellows. It was brilliantly and dashingy painted, admirable, if conventional in composition, full of action, movement and other "dynamic qualities" of which only Bellows was capable. Yet it evoked no deep emotions in me. It lacked all the poignancy, pathos and human element that this greatest Christian drama requires. It was neither a great conception, nor an interpretation of it, but merely clever illustration. At the same time, if my memory serves me well, I visited an exhibition of the work of Max Weber. It consisted of "Still Lives" and figure arrangements. There was not a single religious theme among them. Yet I was strangely impressed by the deeply religious spirit and almost passionate intensity that pervaded those haunting arrangements of pagan nudes. "Here," thought I, "is an artist capable of painting a great human Crucifixion."

A small but very unusual exhibition of Weber's latest work on view in Neumann's Print Room in New York strengthened my original impression. The Art of Weber is highly sophisticated, intellectual, yet at the same time also emotional, almost passionate. He possesses an extraordinary understanding of form in the structural and voluminous sense. Although derived from Picasso, Cezanne, Rousseau and others, his art has a strange mysticism and religious spirit, peculiarly Jewish in its intensity that stamp it very unique in American art. His color is simple almost to severity, yet at times it reaches the heights of perfect symphony. The people that flock to the exhibitions of the extensively advertised European geniuses will turn away disdainfully from Weber's austere art. It is too simple to be understood, too quiet to be worthy of their notice. They will be moved neither by his landscapes in which he so beautifully expresses the virginity of the soil, its growth and its great drawing power, its almost sensual voluptuousness and richness, nor by his "Still Lives," so singing in arrangement and color, painted with a fine, almost tactual regard for texture; nor will they, I fear, sympathize with his women, thick-set and bulky of form, homely and sad-eyed, ageless, yet not devoid of a rich sensuality, strangely moving because of their innate humanity.

Weber is an aristocrat. He is a painter for the few.

MOSES SOYER